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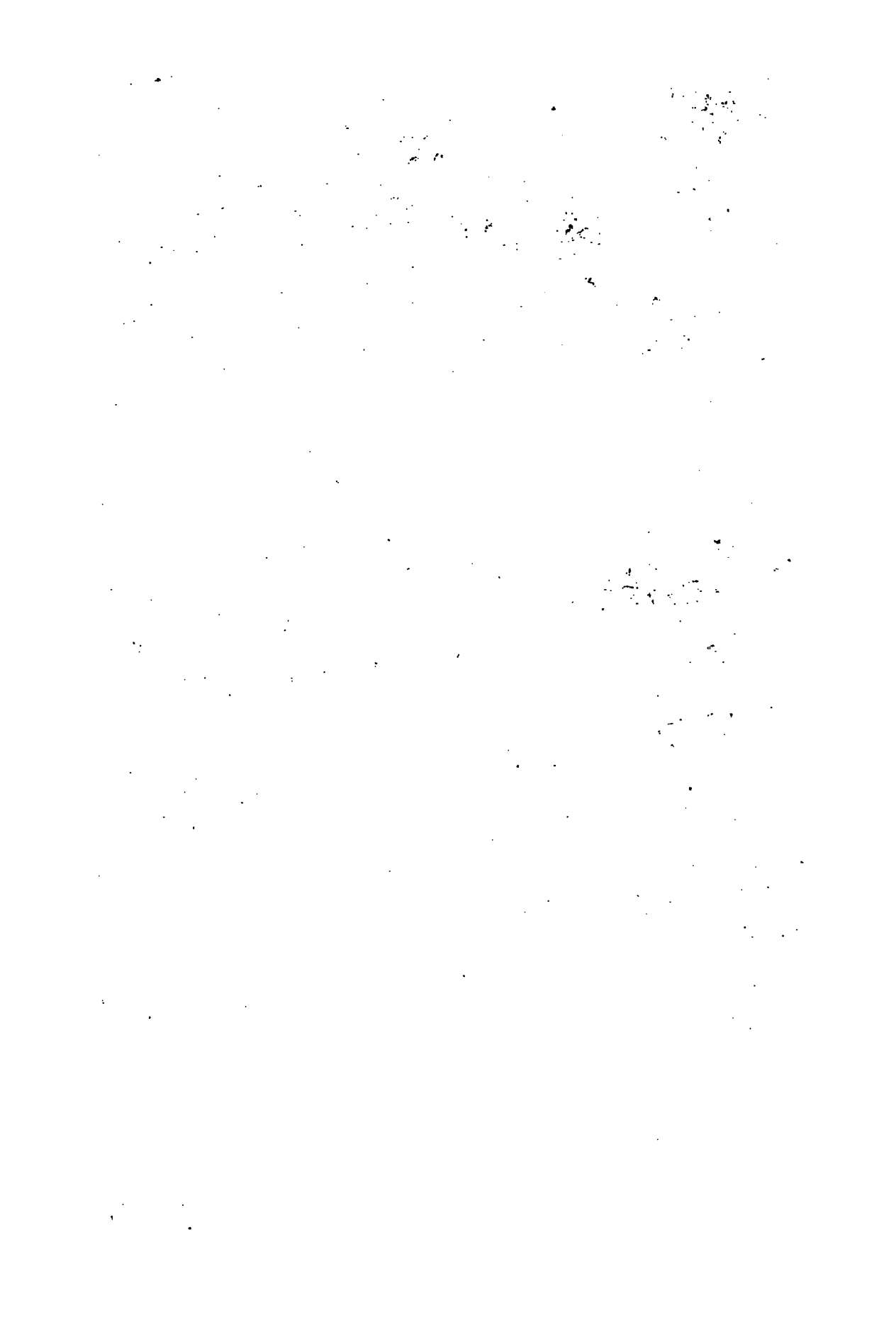
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JOURNAL  
OF A  
VOYAGE UP THE IRRAWADDY  
TO  
MANDALAY AND BHAMO,

BY  
J. TALBOYS WHEELER,  
SECRETARY TO THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF BRITISH BURMA.

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likely to prove dangerous. The vessel itself is said to have sunk in the bed of the river, or otherwise it might be blown up.

*Monday, 7th November.*—The moon had nearly reached the full, and the river scenery was bright and attractive throughout the night. The atmosphere was cool on deck, but very hot in the cabins. The musquitoes were large, numerous and very hungry, and most distressing to those who had no musquitoe curtains. As the morning advanced the voyage became more interesting. We passed by little Burmese villages on the banks of the river, composed of houses of wood and mats, and occupied by a cheerful population. Young men and women ran hastily to the bank to see the steamer pass, although the sight must now be a tolerably familiar one. There were children noisily bathing in the river, for though the water is apparently dirty from being laden with silt, yet it is sweet and soft. Some of the boys took pleasure in coming out in small narrow boats to be tossed about in the back water of the steamer, reckless of being overset; a catastrophe however which would be regarded with small alarm by this amphibious population. At one village we saw cotton yarn wound round a native revolving machine. Also lazy herdsmen riding on the backs of their buffaloes; a sight which is common enough in Burma, but appears somewhat strange to the European visitor. Also saw elephant grass for the first time. This grass is drooping and dwarfed now in consequence of the cessation of the rains, but is still sufficiently tall to conceal an elephant.

The European passengers are only five in number, namely, Dr. Booth who is going to Bhamo for the sake of his health, Mr. Simkin, who is agent for the company's steamers at Prome and Thayetmyo; Mr. Ferrie and Mr. Stuart who are going to Bhamo; and myself. More were expected but were apparently deterred from a variety of considerations including that of expense; for though the cost of passage is reasonable, yet when added to the home charges which continue much the same, it must be felt, not perhaps by bachelors, but by married people. Otherwise, as will be seen hereafter, the pleasures of the trip are well worthy of the expenditure. The native passengers, consisting of Burmese, Chinese and Moguls, were unexpectedly numerous; and must have suffered much last night from the musquitoes.

There is one point to which I beg to invite attention. The steamer "Colonel Fytche" is absolutely without arms. In the bows there is a very small brass swivel gun, which would be of very little use in the event of danger. There are no fire arms beyond two or three revolvers which are the Captain's private property. Under ordinary circumstances there is perhaps nothing to fear, but still considering that at any time disturbances might break out in Ava, when it would be of the utmost importance to relieve or carry away European residents from Mandalay, it would seem desirable that a stand of arms and a few cutlasses should be at the disposal of the Captain.

At eleven o'clock A. M. we arrived at Donabew, Donabew after a twenty-six hours voyage from Rangoon.



Judging from the number of boats anchored off the bank, and the number of houses and quantities of stacked wood in the neighbourhood of the river, this must be an important place. The principal trade is in salt-fish, ngapee, and paddy. Ngapee is a condiment made of preserved fish, which is universally eaten by the people of Burma, and for which there is consequently a very large demand. It is a sort of paste which mixes with rice like chutnee. Having never been induced to taste it, I am unable to offer any experienced opinion as regards its flavour, but judging from its appearance I should think anchovies would be preferred by Europeans.

The afternoon was hot and the scenery presented but few variations. A thick fringe of foliage was occasionally followed by a sandy beach or mud bank, but otherwise there was nothing to relieve the eye. A slight wind and storm clouded the sky in the evening.

Henzada.

Reached Henzada at eleven o'clock p. m. Anchored off a very dreary sand and mud bank, which was none the less bare on account of the water having fallen several feet since the rains. We were told that the town of Henzada was nearly three miles off. One or two passengers landed, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, as there was a beautiful moonlight; but they soon returned reporting that the place was utterly desolate. As we were not expected until the next day, there was nobody waiting for the arrival of the steamer, excepting a chup-rassee of Captain Plant, the deputy commissioner, who at once ran off to Henzada to inform his master.



The arrival of the "Colonel Fytche" in the middle of the night must be somewhat inconvenient to the district officers. Thus Mr. Man, the assistant commissioner, had to get up about one o'clock in the morning at Henzada, and make his way to the bank of the river with the money required to pay the extra assistant commissioners, and ministerial officers up the river; and he brought with him abundant evidence that the country was quite as muddy, as we had already inferred from the appearance of the shore.

*Tuesday, 8th November.*—About five o'clock A. M. Captain Plant came on board. He reported that his district was very quiet. The crops were abundant and there was no dacoity. He came however in a police boat with thirteen constables inside, for the purpose of taking an extra assistant commissioner by surprise, and breaking up and scattering a party of bad characters, opium eaters and gamblers, who were likely to plan some disturbances and occasion trouble. These extra assistant commissioners are a class of native officials, selected generally from the officials who were maintained under Burmese rule. They are very good fellows in their way, and much better than might have been expected from their past experiences; but still they require looking after.

Captain Plant had some little difficulty lately with some of the servants of the King of Ava, who would stick up the royal flag of their master at the different spots where the paddy was stored for the use of his majesty's dawk boat and steamer. The flag of the King of Ava consists of a peacock worked

upon a white streamer, surrounded by a border. Captain Plant told the men that they might mark the spots with plain white flags, but that they must not set up the flag of Ava on British territory; and when the matter was fully explained, the men readily promised not to set up the royal flag for the future. The point may seem a trivial one, but the appearance of the royal flag on British territory amongst an impulsive people like the Burmese, only excites wild speculation and disquietude.

Had a long and pleasant conversation with Captain Plant on general subjects. He wants to have a good district gaol instead of the existing lock up; but Doctor Donnelly, the officiating inspector general of gaols, is restrained by financial considerations from supporting the application. He is anxious also for the promotion of some of his extra assistant commissioners; but this anxiety is doubtless shared by every district officer in the province. He suggested that lotteries would be a far more popular mode of raising extra revenue amongst the Burmese than either income tax or local cesses. As a matter of fact there can be no doubt that he is correct. All Indo-Chinese races are imbued with the wildest spirit of gambling, and would play away everything they possessed, not excepting their souls. But even if it could be possible to over-ride the public opinion of the people of England so far as to establish lotteries, the whole province would be rapidly impoverished and demoralised. Land revenue and customs would suffer severely and nothing would flourish but the abkaree, or excise on spirits and drugs.



About noon we reached a place called Thendau, Thendau. some twenty miles from Henzada up a creek on the opposite side of the river. Here a plain white flag was set up to indicate that one of the King's servants had some paddy to put on board; and we duly found two large boat loads of the paddy. Accordingly the steamer was anchored off the creek for three or four hours during the heat of the day, when only a slight breeze was stirring. Meantime the Burmese official brought one of his boats alongside the flat, and commenced very deliberately to ship his cargo. The other boat would no doubt have followed, but from some accident, arising from the habitual carelessness and happy-go-lucky phase of the Burmese character, the crew were all absent, and the opportunity was lost. The boat that did succeed in coming alongside contained about six hundred baskets of rice; but when two hundred baskets had been shipped, it was discovered that the boat was leaking and rapidly sinking; and it was therefore deemed expedient to return to the shore with as much haste as was compatible with the dignity of the petty native official. The scene was a significant illustration of the way in which the King is served by his servants.

Heard from Captain Plant a somewhat curious story of an execution. The criminal was a fine strapping young Burmese in the pride of manhood, who had murdered his wife under circumstances of extreme ferocity, having stabbed her in several places with a small knife. After conviction he managed to wrench an iron bar out of the prison wall,

Captain Poole reported that besides the affair of the flags, the King's servants had adopted other proceedings, which were of a questionable character. The King had bought very large quantities of paddy in the neighbourhood and paid for it; and his servants had further demanded that the people should make presents of rice to the King. The inhabitants had acceded to the demand, but complained of it to the assistant commissioner. It seemed doubtful whether the contributions of rice had been required as an acknowledgment of the King's supremacy, or whether they were only regarded as a kind of commission to the King as the purchaser of the paddy. But whilst the inhabitants complained of the demand, they would not make any formal charge against the King's servants who collected the rice; such as would have enabled the assistant commissioner to proceed against these petty officials under the penal code.

Captain Poole alluded to a fact with which I was imperfectly acquainted. During the first Burmese war of 1824, the Talains of Pegu had joined the English in large numbers. This might have been expected from the past history of Burma. From time immemorial there have been incessant wars between the Talains of Pegu and the Burmese of Ava, not altogether unlike the constantly recurring wars between the English and Scotch from the days of the Picts downwards; and the ascendancy maintained by the Portuguese in Pegu, during the sixteenth and early part of the seventeenth centuries, was mainly owing to the assistance which they furnished to the Talain Kings of Pegu against the Burmese Kings of Ava. During the early part of the last century



the Talains triumphed, and after several victories they swarmed up the Irrawaddy river into the territories of Ava, and took possession of the capital, and established their sovereignty over the dominions of the King. Then followed the reaction. A Burmese hunter, named Alompra, headed a popular rising against the Talain yoke, and not only succeeded in driving the Talains out of Ava, but in extending his empire over Pegu, where he founded the present city of Rangoon. These latter events took place between 1750 and 1760, and are of considerable interest, as the dynasty of Alompra is still reigning in the capital of the old kingdom of Ava.

But to return to Captain Poole and his story of the Talains. When war broke out between the British and the Burmese, the Talains joined our forces in large numbers. They naturally regarded the English troops as their deliverers from the tyranny of the King of Ava, and were led to expect that we should permanently occupy Pegu, and that they would then dwell in peace and safety under the British rule. Unfortunately however the so-called moderate counsels prevailed; or rather the English philanthropy, which ignores history and tradition, and will commit a breach of faith towards a people rather than be too hard upon an Asiatic enemy, succeeded in compelling the government of India to abandon the most important portion of its conquests. Arakan and Tennasserim were alone annexed, and Pegu was restored to all the oppressions of Burmese administration; rendered doubly cruel by the fact that the Burmese were exasperated to the last degree by the assistance which the Talains had afforded to the British. The

Court of Ava became as exclusive and arrogant as before. Crawford's Mission in 1826 utterly failed ; the country was closed against Europeans ; and a second Burmese war became a mere question of time. No sooner had the King of Ava recovered possession of Pegu, than he grossly violated his engagement at Yandabo, by which he had bound himself to extend an amnesty towards all of his subjects who had in any way assisted the English. The Talains of Pegu were brutally massacred in large numbers by the Burmese, and those who survived were compelled to take refuge in Arakan and Tenasserim ; and the British government of the day looked calmly on, preparing to see the Talains sacrificed, rather than risk the unpopularity which would have attended a renewal of the war. The consequence has been that for many years the Talains nurtured a deep hatred against the English for having ungratefully abandoned them to their oppressors, at a time when they had fully earned the protection of the British government. Time has perhaps softened this feeling, but nevertheless years must pass away before this unfortunate national sentiment will have wholly passed away.

Left Myanoung about noon, but merely crossed the river to take in another cargo of paddy belonging to the King. The Burmese broker who shipped the rice gave himself all the airs of a native official ; talking with a loud voice, and looking through the ship's binoculars with considerable dignity, which however was somewhat modified by the fact that he was not over-clean. He was accompanied or rather followed by his so-called secretary ; a half naked



gentleman who squatted about in all directions with a pile of the usual oblong-shaped black paper, which is universally employed by the Burmese, and on which they write with a pencil of soapstone, or French chalk, which is found in great abundance in different parts of Burma. Stopping at this place to take in the paddy was very tedious. The afternoon and evening passed slowly away, but within an hour or two after midnight we were again on the move.

*Thursday, 10th November.*—A lovely morning and a very great improvement in the scenery. In the place of the monotonous fringe of tall grass, under-wood, sand and mud, we saw very pretty woodlands, and the eye could range over a considerable expanse of landscape. In a word we are leaving the low flat country of the delta, and entering the upper region of woodland and fertile plain, diversified by rising grounds. The dim range of the Arakan Hills stands out in bolder and stronger outline, and we can see that their sides are covered with forest and jungle. The river, although still mud-coloured from the silt, sparkles very pleasantly in the morning sunshine ; for the surface is as smooth as glass, and diversified by the shadows of the trees that impart a greener colour to the stream. Here and there we see a fishing boat, or a bamboo raft with a whole family upon it ; or a large quaint vessel, with a cabin of mat and bamboo, that would seem to have been constructed in times primeval after the fashion of a Phœnician galley. Indeed it is by no means improbable that the primitive population of the Eastern seas improved their own rude craft by following the models set them by foreign

traders from Tyre and Sidon. These large galley-shaped vessels contain families of men, women and children, who go looming about the Irrawaddy with paddy, earth-oil, salt-fish, and other nondescript commodities ; and no doubt a little opium is occasionally smuggled by these traders into various places on the river.

Arakan Hills.

As the voyage progresses the scenery becomes more and more varied and beautiful. The Arakan Hills, covered with thick wood, send off a spur which is brought to an abrupt steep close by the river. The side facing the river has been cleared of cultivation, and is covered with numerous statues of Gotama, some of them in white marble. Here the river becomes more winding, and the current is stronger.

Prome.

Arrived at Prome at about half past five in the afternoon. Here the river is almost shut in by forest and mountain ranges. Prome has a more civilized appearance than any place we have seen since we left Rangoon. There is a pleasant walk on the top of the bank which hangs over the river, with seats for the European residents. Major Munro, the deputy commissioner of Prome, and Major Twynam, the executive engineer of the district, came on board. Every thing in Prome was reported to be very quiet. Crops promising, and no dacoity. Here as elsewhere every one was hungry for news. Later in the evening Mr. Hind, assistant commissioner, came on board. This gentleman appears to have a large local experience of Arakan, dating back from 1835. The principal object of his conversation was to impress me with the demoralis-



ing effect of the Bengal abkarry laws upon the impulsive pleasure-loving people of Burma ; and certainly he furnished sufficient data to prove the utter fallacy of the general conclusion that what is good for India is good for Burma. Prior to the introduction of British rule into Arakan the punishment for using opium was death. The people were hard working, sober and simple minded. Unfortunately one of the earliest measures in our administration was the introduction of the abkarry rules by the Bengal board of revenue. Mr. Hind, who had passed the greater part of his long life amongst the people of Arakan, described the progress of demoralization. Organised efforts were made by Bengalee agents to introduce the use of the drug, and create a taste for it amongst the rising generation. The general plan was to open a shop with a few cakes of opium, and to invite the young men in and distribute it gratuitously. Then when the taste was established, the opium was sold at a low rate. Finally, as it spread throughout the neighbourhood, the price was raised, and large profits ensued. Sir Arthur Phayre's account of the demoralization of Arakan, by the Bengal abkarry rules is very graphic, but Mr. Hind's statements were more striking as he entered more into detail. He saw a fine healthy generation of strong men succeeded by a rising generation of haggard opium smokers and eaters, who indulged to such an excess that their mental and physical powers were alike wasted. Then followed a fearful increase in gambling and dacoity. But the subject need not be pursued further in this place. It will suffice to record the local experience collected, without unnecessary comment. The evil has been of

late years in a great measure checked by the introduction of the farming system.

It was far more gratifying to hear from Major Munro and Major Twynam that a marked improvement was perceptible in the habits of the people of the Prome district, which could only be attributed to the beneficial administration of the British government. Under native rule, and indeed in a great measure under our own rule, the Burmese have been generally described as a light-hearted people, thinking only of to-day and reckless of the morrow; enjoying life to the utmost so long as they were capable of indulging in material pleasures, and then passing an old age in the seclusion of the monastery. No one saved money, for that only excited the cupidity of the native rulers; and thus improvidence was literally encouraged. I have heard that so long as a Burman had a jar of ngapee and a basket of rice, he would not work, even though offered two rupees a day; when however the rice and ngapee were exhausted he would work cheerfully for eight annas. Under British administration the saving instinct is once more developing. But the people are ignorant and suspicious of the banking system. They have no hoondees like the people of India, and even the wealthier classes do not like paying for the anna stamp on every cheque. However, as they continue saving, and persistently seek to make a provision for the future, they will probably work out the problem for themselves of making money beget money. Fortunately there is an immense acreage of culturable lands which are lying waste, and which offer a means for profitable investment; and when the land



settlement is placed on a footing more in accordance with the ideas of the people, a large increase in the land revenue may be confidently expected.

*Friday, 11th November.*—Started in the morning for Thayet-myo, after passing the coldest night we had experienced throughout the voyage, and it may be added the coldest night I ever felt in Burma.

The scenery now became more diversified than ever. The hilly slopes in the neighbourhood of Promé, thickly cultivated with custard-apples, take the form of ranges; but as we proceed we pass individual eminences covered with forest and jungle. One marked feature in the appearance of the shore on either side was produced by the fall of water since the close of the rains. Already the river has fallen some twenty feet, and before the close of the hot weather next April the fall will be forty feet. This naturally elevates the forests and villages on either side of the river, and hides much of the inland scenery from our view.

About five o'clock in the afternoon reached Tha-Thayet-myo. yet-myo. This is the last place of any importance within British territory, and is garrisoned with a wing of Her Majesty's 76th Europeans, the 36th Native Infantry, and a battery of Artillery. The cantonment is very prettily laid out, and presents quite an English appearance from the neatness of the grass and roads. The fort is sufficiently strong, but further means of defence appear to be wanting on the opposite side of the river.

Mr. Alexander, the assistant commissioner, came

on board. Colonel Horace Browne, the deputy commissioner, was absent in the district. We again saw the peacock flag set up to indicate the wood which had been stacked up for the King's steamers. Informed Mr. Alexander of what had taken place in Myanoung and Henzada as regards setting up the King's flag in British territory, and suggested that a plain white flag would answer every purpose and prove less objectionable.

Wrote to Colonel Hackett, who commanded Thayet-myo, and whom I had known at Madras some twelve years ago. He was on the other side of the river, or I should have been glad to have seen him. Considering that the steamer was without arms, except a very small brass swivel which was little better than a toy, and a revolver or two belonging to Captain Bacon, I asked Colonel Hackett to lend me twelve Enfield rifles, with bayonets, and ammunition, until our return from Bharno. The requisition was very kindly acceded to, and the rifles were received on board, very much to the satisfaction of Captain Bacon. The latter officer had felt much the want of arms, when he was off Mandalay during the insurrection of 1866. At that crisis Captain Bacon could only arm his men with billets of wood, and rods of iron, and a few handspikes; and this too at a time when a large party of the King's troops were on board armed with dhâs, or large knives, and muskets. Great difficulty was subsequently experienced in getting rid of the royal troops. However Captain Bacon directed them to pile their arms in the fore part of the vessel, and then to go aft where Captain Sladen desired to speak to them. The men obeyed,



and Captain Bacon was thus enabled to secure their arms. Ultimately the men went ashore, and Captain Bacon returned their arms; not however without the preliminary precaution of pouring a jug of water down the barrel of each musket.

*Saturday, 12th November.*—The morning was very warm at Thayet-myo, and it was noon before we steamed away. The river here had fallen away apparently more than at Prome, and left a broad expanse of brown clay with precipitous sides, which every now and then cracked in large masses, and fell into the river, where doubtless it melted away into silt. In the afternoon we passed the boundary pillars <sup>Boundary pillars.</sup> which separate the territories of British Burma from those of Ava. As we progress the scenery becomes even more diversified with mountains dotted with pagodas.

*Sunday, 13th November.*—Having proceeded for a <sup>Ava territory.</sup> considerable distance into the territories of the King of Ava, it was natural that we should expect to see some signs of having left British dominions for a country under native rule. In the river however no perceptible change was to be seen. The region on either bank was of the same character as that which meets the eye between Thayet-myo and the frontier. At length the Captain cried out, "There is a man being crucified!" Sure enough, on going to the side of the steamer we saw the man with his arms and legs stretched out cross-ways to their utmost extent on a wooden frame-work.

The details of a crucifixion are so painfully associated with the last scene in the life of the divine

founder of Christianity, as to invest the barbarous spectacle with peculiar interest. In the present case the man was not crucified on a perpendicular cross like a Roman criminal, but on a cross, in the form of the letter X, and the legs of the sufferer were stretched out in the same way as the arms. The criminal had apparently died very recently, for the body looked quite fresh, and two carrion birds close by had not yet commenced their horrid feast. Captain Bacon said that the man had been probably strangled before crucifixion; and if so the sight, although sufficiently revolting, was not perhaps more so than the old custom of hanging in chains, which prevailed in England until a comparatively recent period. The crucifixion had been carried out on a bare sandy reach on the side of the river; and it was subsequently ascertained that the man was a dacoit, who was thus exposed after execution on the scene of his atrocities, in order to excite a wholesome horror in the minds of all who passed up or down the river. However therefore the barbarism of a crucifixion may be condemned, the spectacle satisfies a rude sense of justice; and the sympathy, which would otherwise be felt for a man who has been subjected to such a horrible punishment, is transferred to the victims of his still more horrid crimes.

Meng-la

About three o'clock in the afternoon we reached the village of Meng-la, the first important place in Ava dominion. The people turned out as usual to behold us from the tall sloping bank of the river, and sat down by each other in rows, and contemplated us like connoisseurs. Some of our party climbed the bank and explored the village; but as they found it



chiefly inhabited by priests, children, half-starved pigs, and pariah dogs, and moreover were not treated with the respect which is ordinarily extended to European visitors in villages in British Burma, they speedily returned to the steamer. Our stay at Meng-la was for the purpose of taking in wood for the steamer, and accordingly one continuous stream of coolies was running along the side of the river, and then up a long plank into the hold, laden with billets of wood ; whilst another stream of coolies returned from the steamer for fresh billets. The coolies were not naked bronze-coloured people like we see in India, but generally belonged to the fairer race of Burmese. They included both men and women, who all displayed a considerable amount of red and yellow clothing ; whilst even the ladies, who carried the wooden billets, had adorned their hair with flowers after the most approved fashion. After stopping at Meng-la about an hour we proceeded up the Myengoon channel, in the hope of passing it before dusk. The attempt however was vain. The current was too strong, and after several unsuccessful efforts, we were compelled to anchor for the night. This result was not surprising. The " Nagpore " steamer was lately engaged throughout the whole of one day, namely from five o'clock in the morning until four o'clock in the afternoon, before she succeeded in passing through this channel.

Myengoon  
channel.

*Monday, 14th November.*—Last night was very cool, and would have been very pleasant but for the conversational powers of the native gentlemen in the flat. After chanting a portion of the Koran with that monotonous sing song, which drives a half-

sleepy Christian distracted, some lively parties commenced a long controversy in Hindustanee respecting the meaning of certain words in the English language. It was difficult to ascertain precisely what the disputants actually said; but judging from the intermittent fits of laughter, it would appear that our language afforded them intense amusement, and was not regarded with that respect which might have been expected. The manners and customs of the native passengers are worthy of study. Their powers of sleep and contemplation are almost superhuman. Their genius in attempting to pay a smaller price for their passage than the one advertised is very considerable; and doubtless would be very successful were it not met in every case by a prompt threat on the part of the Captain to land the refractory passenger at the nearest village. Then however the money is paid up with great promptitude and perturbation of spirit, and the alleged poverty of the passenger proves to be a deception. The behaviour of the Burmese women would bear favourable comparison with that of the ladies of any other nation in the world. Although they wear no veil of any kind, there is an innate modesty in their appearance, which is sufficient to command respect. The same cannot be said of some young Tamil girls, whom we left at Thayet-myo; and who occasionally pretended to cover their faces with their hands, but otherwise chatted so freely with their neighbours, and laughed so loudly and significantly, that it is impossible to avoid the suspicion that the object of their visit to the cantonment of Thayet-myo was of a somewhat questionable character.



After much difficulty and no little shouting and tugging at the wheel we at last succeeded in passing through the Myengoon channel. The difficulty was somewhat enhanced by a heavy rain, which obscured the view, but made it very cool ; but the result was highly satisfactory, as by nine o'clock A. M. we were proceeding fairly on our voyage.

About twelve o'clock we arrived at Mugway, a vil-<sup>Mugway.</sup>lage situated on a bare sandy reach, which presented a considerable contrast to the jungle covered heights on the opposite shore. At Mugway we anchored for about an hour. Judging from the large number of native boats which are moored off Mugway, the villagers might be supposed to be much given to fishing. This indeed is the case with most villages on the lower Irrawaddy, as fishing and the preparation of salt-fish and ngapee, are alike lazy and profitable employments, and are thus suited to the genius of the Burmese as they would be perhaps to the indolent and easy going population of most countries. At Mugway however the people deal chiefly in mustard-oil, gram, and other grains ; and fishing is very precarious. There are not so many fish on the upper Irrawaddy as in the lower streams.

Here as elsewhere we see Buddhist monasteries, pagodas, and places of rest, known as dzyats ; sometimes in the neighbourhood of a village ; sometimes on the top of an isolated hill, or in the seclusion of an unpeopled valley. If they serve no other purpose, their erection is regarded as an act of merit by the Burmese, and the man who builds one is revered and respected as the great man of the neighbourhood.

The scenery after leaving Mugway becomes once again dull and monotonous. Long sandy reaches on one side, and tall precipitous banks on the other, do not present an agreeable picture ; and as we approach Yaynan-gyoung the precipitous banks on the right are some seventy feet in height.

*Tuesday, 15th November.*—A cool fresh morning, but not sufficiently so to justify woollen clothes. About seven o'clock we reached Yanan-gyoung, which is a considerable town, and a great mart for earth-oil. The oil wells are about six miles off. The town is decidedly picturesque from the quaint old fashioned barks, with their curved and lofty prows, which are moored off the bank ; and also from the many pagodas and monasteries which crown the heights, and gleam pleasantly in the morning sun. There is nothing gloomy in the religious buildings of the Buddhists, and in this respect they exhibit a marked difference to the cemetery-like temples of the Hindoos, and even to the stately cathedrals of Christian lands. The Burmese delight in white and gold, with an occasional dash of red or blue. Tall masts, with gay streamers on the top, indicate a monastery and school ; and the graceful htee, or umbrella, on the summit of a pagoda is infinitely prettier than a weather cock, although perchance not so useful. Again the yellow garment of the priests is far brighter and pleasanter than the dull monkish cowl of Roman Catholic countries, especially when it is clean, which however is not always the case.

The Buddhist religion is perhaps the least gloomy of all those creeds which involve a belief in the im-



mortality of the soul. There is no eternity of hell ; no hopeless state of damnation even for the worst of criminals. The soul may be condemned to a lower state of existence in the next life, or even to a limited hell ; but existence is practically eternal until by many lives of purity and contemplation the spirit sinks into the beatified repose of Nirvana. This belief in the transmigration of the soul has presented for ages an impregnable front both to Christianity and Islam. It has long been dying out in India, because the Brahmans have found it expedient to introduce still easier ways of salvation than the old system of Brahmanical rites and sacrifices, or even the later Buddhist system of a life of purity and contemplation. Faith alone has been declared sufficient to entitle the soul of the worst criminal to a place in the heaven of Vishnu. Faith in Rama, faith in Krishna, as incarnations of the eternal spirit of Vishnu,—even the constant and senseless repetitions of their respective names,—will carry the dying soul of the Hindoo into eternal bliss, or absorb it in the divine essence, the supreme soul, which animates the world.

The scenery beyond Yanan-gyoung is very unpicturesque. Nothing but sandy reaches, with a background of low hills sparsely covered with low woods. Here there is little to do but observe the manners of the native passengers, and as they appear to do nothing but sleep, smoke and contemplate empty space, the study is not so profitable as might have been anticipated. Found by personal experience that the Burmese pilot prefers Manilla cheroots to Burmans, on the ground that they are finer tobacco. The fact is curious, inasmuch as nearly all British

residents in Burma declare that they prefer Burmese cheroots to Manillas. Some indeed who come from Madras, declare that they prefer Trichinopolies, which I have been assured on good authority are nearly as bad as Bengal cheroots. The Burmese pilot has a more correct taste. Manillas are the only cheroots which are at present worth smoking in the East. If however either Trichinopoly or Burmese manufacturers would pass the leaves of their tobacco through glazed cylinders, and squeeze out all the bitter juice of the fibre, and the saltpetre that clings to the leaf, they might succeed in making cheroots which would not undermine the constitution.

Captain Bacon furnished me with some information about the so-called emigration of coolies which is carried on from Chittagong and the ports in the Madras Presidency into British Burma. I agree with him that in some cases it approaches rather too nearly to a disguised slave trade, but cannot see how it is to be stopped or brought under beneficial supervision. Enterprising traders bring over coolies and women passengers free of charge; and of course obtain the passage money from employers of labour in Rangoon, who find means to recoup themselves out of the labour of the coolies. The women are freely bought up by Moguls, who employ them as menial servants, and probably in some instances in a more dubious capacity. All that can be said is that no objection appears to be ever raised either by the women or the coolies. But how far this emigration differs from the slave trade we have endeavoured to suppress in Zanzibar and the Persian Gulf is a question which can scarcely as yet be determined.



About one o'clock P. M. we reached Sim Phoogoun, Sim Phoogoun. an important place on account of its trade in gram, but situated too far from the shore to admit of a visit. At six o'clock in the evening we arrived at the lively Sillay-myo. town of Sillay-myo, famous for its manufacture of boxes, drinking cups, and small trays painted and varnished red inside, and curiously ornamented with nondescript gold coloured figures outside. Captain Bacon kindly bought me three boxes with trays for about eight rupees. In Rangoon or Calcutta they would have cost at least three times the price. The varnish and workmanship are very superior. My Bengallee servant bought some quaint black and red drinking cups for a few annas.

*Wednesday, 16th November.*—The temperature has now become exceedingly pleasant, and it is some days since we felt anything like heat. The nights especially are deliciously cool. The scenery is very poor. On one side a sandy reach or mud bank. On the other side shapeless coarse looking hills, sparsely covered with stunted jungle. The Burmese Goths in this part of the country have taken to white washing the outside of their pagodas, and the effect is far from pleasing. Possibly if the forest was thicker and the foliage greener, the presence of white would not be disagreeable ; but the jungle is short, coarse and muddy green, and consequently the white washing only serves to make the surrounding scenery appear dirtier. The river however presents a fine expanse of water, and notwithstanding the silt sparkles very pleasantly in the morning sunshine.

A new well of earth-oil has been recently dis-

covered on the right bank of the river, amongst the bare hideous hills. The oil has been found in two or three different places, and we saw a number of native boats plying near the spot. Unfortunately earth-oil is still retained as a royal monopoly, and instead of benefitting the people only serves to increase the wealth of the Burmese officials.

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ghan.

About ten o'clock this morning the towers and pagoda tops of the ruined city of Paghan began to loom in the distance. It was a wilderness of ancient temples, of quaint and curious towers, which once served to decorate a great capital, but had been for centuries abandoned to the solitude of the jungle. A teeming population had passed away, and left nothing but their temples as monuments over their graves.

The foundation of Paghan, like the foundation of all great cities, excepting those of very modern date, is involved in hopeless obscurity. Its more ancient temples are referred to the ninth century of the Christian era; whilst, according to Burmese annals, its downfall took place in the thirteenth century. The story of the circumstances which led to the ruin of Paghan appears to be based on fact. A Chinese ambassador had been dispatched to the court of Paghan, and was arrogantly put to death by the King. The Emperor of China sent a large army to revenge this atrocity. The King of Paghan posted a considerable force in advance at the mouth of the Bhamo river, which was then as now, the commercial route between Western China and Ava. At the same time he strengthened the defences of Paghan by pulling down

a large number of temples both arched and square. But the Chinese army was irresistible. The Burmese force at the Bhamo river was utterly routed. The King of Paghan lost heart, and abandoned his defences, and fled to Bassein. The Chinese advanced and occupied the city of Paghan, and continued to pursue the Burmese army to a considerable distance below Prome.

But although the ruins of Paghan are the relics of one of the greatest cities in the Golden Peninsula, they are scarcely known to the western world. The existence of the place is not even mentioned by any traveller before the middle of the last century. About the latter period Captain Baker and Lieutenant North were sent on a joint embassy by the East India Company to the court of Alompra, the founder of the still reigning dynasty of Ava; but they merely noticed the number of pagodas which were still standing and in good repair. Colonel Symes also visited the place in 1795. Later still in 1826 the Burmese made their last stand at Paghan against the British army in the first Burmese war; and the late Colonel Sir Henry Havelock, who wrote the history of the campaign, notices the great number of monuments, but adds that they excite no sensation beyond that of barren wonderment. Colonel Yule, who visited the place in 1855, was thus taken by surprise at the appearance of Paghan. He states that he differs widely from the opinion of Colonel Havelock; and devotes an entire chapter of his narrative of the Mission to Ava in 1855, to a description of these remarkable remains. Consequent-



ly all the European gentlemen on board the "Colonel Fytche" were most anxious to pay a visit to Paghan.

Captain Bacon had promised to anchor his steamer for an hour or two opposite Paghan to enable us to land; and we had hoped to do so either in the evening or early morning, when there would have been no difficulty in exploring the place. But we were to some extent doomed to be disappointed. It was nearly twelve o'clock in the day, and beneath the full blaze of a burning sun, that we at last anchored off the great pumpkin pagoda, so called from the shape of its tower. However there was no hesitation. Solar hats and umbrellas were soon put into requisition, and our party of seven, including the four European passengers, Captain Bacon and his chief officer, and the old Burmese pilot for interpreter, stepped into the boat and were soon landed on the shore.

First we ascended a dreary eminence of mud, enlivened here and there with large bare stones. Then we approached the pumpkin pagoda and climbed a long flight, or series of flights, of old brick steps. At the top was a paved court yard, surrounded by a wall. The pumpkin pagoda is perfectly white, and thus its great pumpkin-shaped tower is seen from a very considerable distance. Within the tower and facing the court yard is a great image of Gotama Buddha in a sitting or rather squatting posture, made of alabaster and adorned with gilding. This is the usual posture in which Gotama is represented. It is supposed to depict him at the exact moment when he was delivered from all the cares and sorrows of



an existence in the universe of worldly passions and endless transmigrations, and became a Buddha out of pure benevolence, to teach the world the true way of deliverance from the evils of life and consciousness, and final absorption in the beatified state of eternal repose known as Nirvana.

The ruins of Paghan spread over a large plain covered with stunted brushwood, and extend for about eight miles along the river and two miles inland. Colonel Yule considers that there are about eight hundred to a thousand temples of all sizes, and this no doubt approximates to the truth. One Burmese tradition estimates them at 999 in number; whilst according to another there are 4444; but both these calculations are palpably mythical. Of the ancient city nothing remains but a brick rampart, and the fragments of an old gateway. Streets and houses, and even the royal palace, have been swept away, leaving nothing behind but this wilderness of temples of brick and stone.

The place however is not utterly devoid of inhabitants. In the immediate neighbourhood of the pumpkin pagoda are a few wooden huts, the abodes of fishermen and manufacturers of varnished cups and boxes; also some wooden monasteries where the phongyees, or Buddhist priests, in coarse yellow garments, lead a life of utter seclusion. A few pariah dogs barked as usual at our approach, but otherwise all was still excepting a babel of voices which issued from a monastery school. We stopped at one miserable shed, where some half naked Burmese were manufacturing varnished boxes. Here we

found that their ware was not papier machê, as we had supposed, but that it consisted of a frame work of bamboo matting, plastered with a thick black varnish of native composition. Being anxious to procure a half finished box as a specimen of the workmanship, we informed the Burmese pilot accordingly. The manufacturers were a melancholy set of men, but they burst into fits of laughter at the proposition ; and when at length the bargain was concluded, and a large box was purchased for a rupee, their mirth was uncontrollable. Even a grim old lady, who seemed as though she had never smiled in her life, sat and laughed until the tears ran down her face. The mystery of this unexpected mirth was impenetrable, but it may be remarked that a European does not land at Paghan perhaps above once a year, and very rarely indeed in the day time.

The principal temples of Paghan are square buildings raised over vaults or cloisters. Several terraces are raised one above the other ; and from the highest terrace rises a steeple, either bell-shaped of the ordinary Burmese type, or else with great bulging sides like those of the tall domes of the temples of India. Their foundations are of stone, but the main buildings are constructed of a very hard and superior kind of brick, covered with plaster. Round some of the temples is a paved terrace. The entrance to each is guarded by two huge stone monsters ; a kind of dragon or griffin. The gateways are gothic arches, surmounted by curious carvings representing flames, and are perhaps intended to indicate the halo of glory which is usually painted round the heads of Buddhist saints. The figures of

Gotama are of all sizes, and some are of colossal proportions; some are of white alabaster, others are painted a deep red, and all are more or less adorned with gold. Some of the smaller figures are entirely covered with gold. In the Ananda pagoda are a number of pictures like those in the Shoay-dagon pagoda in Rangoon; also several statues of Gotama thirty feet high and covered with gilding. In the Thapinya pagoda there are several red Gotamas in the cloisters, whilst the centre of the building is occupied by another red statue twenty feet high. On either side of the entrance to this pagoda, at the summit of the steps above the dragons, were two small figures of priests standing in long gowns, with umbrellas over their heads. One of these figures was the very counterpart of the statue of an English archbishop of the middle ages; and I was once before startled with a similar resemblance in a life-sized image of the same character, covered with gold mixed with black, near the foot of the staircase in the rooms of the Asiatic Society at Calcutta.\* Moreover, the umbrella over the little archbishop bore a remarkable similarity to the small circular roof over the pulpit of an English cathedral, which is popularly supposed to serve as a sounding board. Other resemblances, including the ground plan of most of the temples, which is shaped like a cross after the manner of European cathedrals, have induced some missionaries to presume that these buildings had a Christian origin. This idea seems somewhat preposterous. It is far more likely that there

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\* I have in my own possession two small wooden images of the same type; and hundreds of others of a similar character are to be seen in the pagodas in Upper Burma.

is a Buddhist element in the Christianity of the dark ages, of which monasticism evidently forms a part; just in the same way that there is a great deal of Platonism in the early Fathers.

Besides these pagodas, and numerous other temples more or less of the same character, there are hundreds of other religious buildings of all kinds and forms. The latter are described by Colonel Yule as including the bell-shaped pyramid of dead brick-work in all its varieties, raised over a succession of terraces, or over cloisters and a cell containing the image of Buddha. Also the bluff and knob-like dome of the Ceylon dagobas, with the square cap which is to be seen in the sculptures at Sanchè. Again from the terrace of the Thapinya pagoda we saw a building in which the brick work had fallen away from the image; and this image did not seem to be a Gotama, but bore a marked resemblance to the face of the sphinx, or some other Egyptian statue. In fact the ruins of Pagan require to be explored very carefully and minutely by some one who is familiar with the ancient religions of the world; and it is doing the ancient city a positive injustice to attempt any description after a two hours' hurried visit beneath the fierce rays of an oriental sun. Thus many of the temples and external decorations are evidently of a Brahmanical or Hindoo character, and there are references in Colonel Yule's work to Hindoo images. These we had no time to investigate, but they might tend to confirm a belief which has been entertained by many, that Brahmanism and Buddhism are off-shoots of the same Vedic stem.

Wandering over this desolate plain beneath a noon-day sun was thoroughly exhausting, and I was glad to rest alone for a while on the cool terrace of the Thapinya pagoda, where the north-east breezes were blowing pleasantly, whilst the remainder of our party went elsewhere. After a while three phongyees came up in their yellow garments, and more inquisitive fellows I never had the pleasure of meeting. They contemplated my solar hat, and examined it inside and out with grave curiosity terminating in warm approval. They went in ecstasies over my silk umbrella, which I opened and shut to their great satisfaction. They gave their best attention to my shoes and socks. They warmly applauded my white alpaca coat, and especially my shirt and collar, which they critically examined with their fingers, and compared very favourably with the coarser material of their own yellow garments. They fully appreciated my shirt studs, and burst with acclamations of delight over my braces. By this time other people came up, and contemplated me quietly and admiringly from a distance, as though I had been a picture by one of the old masters. Above all they were struck dumb when I lighted a cheroot from a patent fusee. I then offered a cheroot to the phongyees, which they at once refused, and in this respect totally differed from the phongyees at Rangoon, who never refuse such an offer. The phongyees however at length sufficiently recovered to ask me to give them my solar hat, which I declined. The oldest one then asked for my umbrella, which I also declined. He next, requested that I would give him my shoes, as a memorial of my visit. This also was obviously objectionable,



but in its place I offered him some silver coin, which he refused with indignation. My clerical friends were now offended, if not exasperated, and entered the pagoda in great dudgeon. I took the opportunity to leave the terrace and rejoin our party. As I left I heard them shouting to me to come back from one of the upper galleries, but deemed it more discreet to go on my way.

About two o'clock we returned to the pumpkin pagoda; and then descended the brick stairs, and somewhat precipitous eminence of mud and big stones, and once more entered the boat. Our little party was much knocked up by the expedition, but on reaching the steamer we were all soon restored by the universal remedy in the east of soda water and brandy. The sight however of those extraordinary ruins, and the ideas and sensations they awakened, more than compensated us for all the fatigues we had gone through.

We now steamed past the whole length of Paghan, and saw one large pagoda entirely covered with gilding. Beyond this point the bank rises to a great height, and is composed of sandstone, and very precipitous. Here and there niches or openings were cut in the sandstone, which led to interior chambers, where some phongyees are still living in gloomy seclusion. It is difficult in this age of materialism to imagine what satisfaction men can derive from wasting their lives in such wretched solitudes; but faith and hope, the great anchors of Buddhism, will perhaps account for the phenomena.

Pokokoo.

*Thursday, 17th November.*—About seven o'clock in

the morning we passed the important town of Pokokoo. A large number of pagodas bristled in the distance, and were far more numerous than even the spires of Oxford. This is a great place for trade in gram, and the manufacture of jaggery, or coarse sugar, and putsoes, or cotton clothes, which are worn by the natives round the loins. We anchored at a considerable distance, and landed many large bales of cotton twist, long cloth and grey shirting; and here it may be remarked that there are evidences of a large and increasing trade at almost every station on the Irrawaddy. At Pokokoo an incident occurred which was somewhat amusing. The Hindoo passengers will not cook their food on board the flat, and are consequently compelled to satisfy themselves with parched grain, pounded rice, and other like victuals. When however the steamer anchored off a station, these Hindoos went ashore to cook their food; and much growling and many rows took place if any passer-by cast a shadow upon the cookery. At Pokokoo two Hindoos went ashore, but the inquisitive Burmese crowded about them in great numbers, as though a sacrifice was being performed, or some novel entertainment. About fifty men, women and children of all ages surrounded the unfortunate Hindoos in an irregular ring, and appeared to take the liveliest interest in the cookery, to the extreme exasperation of the cooks. However the latter were very hungry, and moreover were overpowered by numbers, and consequently deemed it expedient to finish their cooking, and eat their breakfast, without further parley. When they had finished they came back to the steamer, leaving some rice and condiments on the

grass. This was at once seized by the Burmese, not for consumption, but for the purpose of examining the victuals, smelling them, and handing them round as curiosities worthy of notice and investigation; whilst men and women appeared to discuss the nature and qualities of the food in question for a considerable period and with great animation. About four o'clock in the afternoon, we arrived at Mingyan, an important place, where we landed a considerable amount of cargo.

**Mingyan.**  
**Yagoon.** *Friday 18th November.*—The scenery both yesterday and to-day is of an inviting character. About ten o'clock in the morning we met the "Colonel Phayre" steamer and sent our letters on board; whilst the Captain shipped a new capstan. In the afternoon we passed Yagoon, a place of small importance.

**Ava and Amarapoora.** *Saturday, 19th November.*—A very cool morning. The scenery continues to improve. The country on both sides the river is covered with wood, and here and there dotted with pagodas. Saw on our left the great bell-shaped pagoda mentioned by Colonel Yule. On our left we passed the old metropolis of Ava, which has now dwindled into a poor village, although its pagodas testify to its former magnificence. Amarapoora was in the distance.

**Tsagaing.** About eight o'clock A. M., we approached the pretty town of Tsagaing, where we anchored. The pagodas facing the river are of the same type as those at Pagan, with gothic arches and guardian dragons. Other pagodas on neighbouring eminences rise above the green trees. Before us is a range of blue hills on which the city of Mandalay is situated.



Beyond Tsagaing the range of eminences, with white pagodas on the summit, become more striking. Those placed on the highest peaks are rendered accessible by long winding paths, which appear like long white curving lines round each hill. These hills and pagodas continue for a considerable distance, but are succeeded by a yellow flat country, with a green back ground.

The foliage on the right bank now begins to attract more attention, and about ten o'clock we approached the golden city of Mandalay, the present capital of Ava.

For many years past it appears to have been customary for the Kings of Ava to change their capital at every revolution or change of dynasty ; but ever since the accession of the present dynasty of Alompra, about the middle of the last century, these changes in the site of the metropolis have been more frequent than ever. Thus the hunter king Alompra himself originally established his capital at his native village of Motsho-boh ; and since then the metropolis has alternated between Ava and Amarapoora, until about fourteen years ago the present King Mounghlon transferred it to Mandalay.

The spot where we anchored was about three miles from the city and residency ; and certainly the appearance of the bank, although slightly picturesque from the number of trees, was altogether different from what had been expected. The people crowded as usual on the rising ground above the river, and watched us with a calm and observant curiosity. At a little distance beyond our steamer the

"Jumna" was unloading some machinery for a steam cotton mill, which had been supplied to the King by a trading company. Mr. Jones, an agent of the company, was superintending the landing of the cases, which was carried on by crowds of coolies who had been pressed into the service of the King, and were compelled to perform the work without pay. The process was a somewhat curious one, and reminded the observer of the building of the pyramids of Egypt, when swarms of captive slaves were employed to drag huge stones along inclined planes for the purpose of construction. Long ropes were attached to each heavy case, which was then drawn from the hold of the "Jumna" along the planks communicating with the bank, and then up the rising ground which led to the top of the bank ; and it is needless to add that the thirty or forty coolies who were employed to pull at the ropes, set up the usual unearthly Asiatic howl whilst dragging each case from the steamer to its destination. The other leading objects on the shore were a few wooden sheds, and a large number of stacks of wood ; but both these sights are so generally to be met with at the different stations on the river that they scarcely seem to call for special notice. A considerable portion of the ground was also marked out by long bamboo poles, and was said to be intended for the construction of ten new steamers, of which the machinery had already been ordered from England by the King.

Many Burmese came on board, including three or four inquisitive and somewhat impertinent phon-gyees ; something after the type of those we had met

at Pagan, but more impudent. They examined and criticised everything on deck, including glass tumblers, a painted tray, the pictured covers of a cheap edition of Miss Braddon's novels, and a history of Russia, which the eldest phongyee opened at the index, and then made a futile attempt to peruse it upside down. The coloured pictures on the paper sides of Miss Braddon's novels excited the special attention of these holy men ; until the elder phongyee, the student in Russian history, discovered, somewhat suddenly, that he was gazing at the fair faces and figures of some English ladies ; and suddenly threw down the book with pious indignation, lest his peace of mind should be disturbed by the feminine attractions thus disclosed to his view, and imperil his escape from the vortex of the passions. Another of the holy men tasted the remains of a bottle of soda water which he found at the bottom of a tumbler ; but he immediately showed by his countenance that he entirely disapproved of the beverage, in which it is not improbable he detected a slight flavour of cognac. Subsequently he appears to have revenged himself by an attempt to carry off the glass tumbler in the folds of his yellow raiment ; but he was happily discovered and the tumbler was recovered. In justice to phongyees generally it should be stated that such an attempt is of very rare occurrence.

Mr. Jones, the agent of a Bombay company, came on board. He has not been many months in the country, but his observations and statements were subsequently confirmed by the direct evi-



dence of other persons with whom I came in contact. He has little hope that the cotton machinery, which he has brought out, will ever be successfully worked by the King ; and although evidently endowed with considerable energy and experience, he has some doubt whether the native agency at his command will succeed in bringing the machinery into working order. The condition on which the machinery has been supplied is that it should be paid for on delivery. This payment appears to have been completed before the machinery left Rangoon. There was however a dispute about the freight between the Captain of the "Jumna" and the Burmese officials ; and the landing of the machinery was delayed for a short time in consequence ; but was ultimately resumed on the understanding, that the boilers only would be detained on board until the question as regards the amount of freight could be satisfactorily settled.

Mr. Jones related one or two stories of the court, which may perhaps be repeated here, as they have been also repeated to me by other persons, who had the means of knowing the truth. Some time before the war broke out, the King requested a so-called General de Facieu, a Frenchman who has been employed by his majesty in training his army, to take six young Burmese youths with him to Europe and America, two to be educated as admirals, two as generals, and the remaining two as manufacturers of balloons. Whilst the negotiations were still pending, news arrived that a white elephant had been discovered at Toungoo ; and this distracting event had such an effect upon the court of Mandalay that noth-

ing else could be taken into consideration, and the educational question fell to the ground. Subsequently, after the disastrous war had broken out between France and Prussia, and France appeared to be at the mercy of the enemy, the King of Ava, whose proclivities had been previously in favour of France, began to regard Prussia as the conquering power. Accordingly he proposed sending a German gentleman to Berlin to conclude a treaty with the King of Prussia, and to take with him three Burmese youths to be educated, one as an admiral, the second as a general, and the third as a politician. The arrangement was however deferred until after the death of the reigning King of Prussia.

About one o'clock P. M., Major McMahon, the officiating political agent at Mandalay, came on board, and hospitably invited the European passengers to put up at the residency; and it was agreed that we should start in his boat about four o'clock in the afternoon on account of the sun, and proceed as far as we could by water, and then go the rest of the way on foot or on ponies. The latest news from Mandalay was that the court, in a sudden fit of piety, had prohibited the European residents from slaughtering any cow or calf, however secretly, within the dominions of the King. So far had these orders been carried out, that some of the Burmese officials had actually carried away a calf belonging to Major McMahon, which was being sent on board the steamer to be slaughtered and cut up, so as to avoid all reasonable ground of offence. The matter was subsequently rectified in part by the prime minister, who wrote politely to the effect



that a mistake had been made, and that the calf would be returned in due course. He then sent a messenger to say that Major McMahon could have his calf by sending for it; but the political agent did not quite approve of this cavalier treatment, and declined to send for the calf. Another verbal message from the minister was followed by a similar result. The calf question now began to grow complicated. The minister could not compromise his dignity by forwarding the calf, and the political agent was in like manner reluctant to send for it. The astute Asiatic at last saw a way to remove the diplomatic difficulty. He sent a verbal message that he was prevented from sending the calf by the fact that he had also two other calves in custody, and that the three had got mixed up together. Accordingly it was necessary that a servant of Major McMahon should select the right calf. The matter however was not quite settled when I left Mandalay.

The action of the Burmese government in this matter of slaughtering calves was somewhat inconsistent, as a very short time previously twelve bullocks had been slaughtered, under the orders of the Burmese officials, for the purpose of greasing one of the King's new flats which was about to be launched. It is however due to the officials to explain that this extreme measure was only carried out as an act of urgent necessity, and not until after every cake of soap, scented or otherwise, procurable in Mandalay, had been bought up for the purpose.

At four o'clock we left the steamer in Major McMahon's boat, and were rowed against a very



strong current towards the creek in the direction of the residency. Our progress was very slow, and we were thus enabled to observe many things, which might otherwise have escaped notice. The houses along the bank were of the usual Burmese type ; frail structures of mats and bamboos raised upon wooden piles which are stuck in the mud. We saw in the distance the new river palace which is under construction, and to which the King proposes to remove for awhile when it is finished early next year. We saw several war galleys, with prows and sterns, elevated very high in the air in a graceful curve. These vessels are rowed, or rather paddled, by forty or sixty men, and pass through the water with considerable rapidity. For about half a mile or a little more they can go as fast as an Oxford eight-oar at full speed, but this pace cannot be kept up for long. They are covered with gilding on the outside, but are painted red inside. A rowing match between three of these boats had taken place on the day before our arrival. We also passed an elegant barge with sides, decks and apartments covered with rich gilding. This is set aside for the use of the queens, and when the ladies take an excursion on the river the barge is drawn along by war boats. But the most magnificent structure was the King's barge. This splendid vessel has been built on two large canoes, and is covered with the richest carving and gilding. This also when used will be drawn by war boats, but it was only finished some two years ago, and has never as yet been visited by the King. In the centre is a lofty tower with eight or nine square stories or terraces of black and gold, surmounted by

the htee or umbrella. The prows of the two canoes on which this water palace is constructed consist each of an immense silver dragon; and behind each dragon is the fierce colossal figure of a warrior deity called by the Burmese a Nat, but which is evidently identical with one of the Devatas of Hindoo mythology, of whom Indra is the special type. The sterns of the canoes are beautifully adorned with gilding, ornamented with a fretted work consisting of small pieces of looking glass, which has a very rich appearance.

These golden boats were quaintly and strangely fashioned, but still were what we had been led to expect from the old accounts of travellers in Ava, and many Burmese traditions. The most painful sight was some eight or ten steamers, which had probably been built at no very distant period, and were lying in a neglected and disabled position. It seemed as though the King had been induced to purchase a number of expensive steamers, which he could scarcely require, or which he was unable to maintain.

After about two hours severe rowing on the part of four boatmen, we at last reached the creek, and arrived at a landing place. Ponies and lights were waiting our arrival, but as the residency was only three quarters of a mile off, most of our little party preferred walking. Road there was none. A rough mud path led along banks, or over ditches, or up and down eminences in which the use of a vehicle was impossible; and even the employment of a wheelbarrow would have been occasionally attended with



inconvenience. At length we crossed over a stream about a quarter of a mile wide on a long bridge of wooden planks; and here those who rode on ponies were compelled to dismount, and have their ponies led over the planking. A narrow walk along a mud bank at last brought us to the English residency.

The residency is situated in a square enclosure, covering an area of about five or six acres; and is surrounded by a fence of wooden posts and bamboo matting about twelve feet high. The wooden house built for Major Sladen is somewhat incommodious, and is now occupied by Dr. Johnston, the residency doctor. Major and Mrs. McMahon occupy a more commodious house of wood and bamboo matting, which had been constructed by the King for the accommodation of General Fytche during the negotiations respecting the treaty of 1867. Few sensations in this world are more agreeable than that of leaving a dark muddy road, and entering a well lighted English drawing-room. Nothing could have exceeded the kind hospitality with which we were received. All the party were entertained at dinner, excepting Dr. Booth, who put up with the Rev. Mr. Marks. Mr. Ferrie was then lodged in Dr. Johnston's house, and Mr. Stuart and myself put up at Major McMahon's.

The only circumstance that marred the evening, as far as I was concerned, arose from the temporary stoppage of all my luggage at the Mandalay custom house. Major McMahon kindly despatched a note to the custom house officials, but it was too late, for all excepting the p                      e away. For-



tunately my Bengallee servant was permitted to bring away some of the more necessary articles, after the custom house peons had been fully satisfied that they were neither arms nor ammunition; and early the next morning the whole of my things were safely brought to the residency.

The detention of the luggage at the custom house was purely an accident, and may be attributed to the delay of my servant. A curious incident illustrative of the character of the Mandalay officials, is perhaps better worth noting. We had on board five cases of copper caps called by the Burmese "hell fire," for the use of the King; but although the custom house people were duly informed that the cases were intended for the King, and ought to be sent at once to the Palace, they refused to pass them on the ground that the cases contained war material. Subsequently the ministers appear to have settled the matter.

*Sunday, 20th November.*—Walked with Major McMahon round the residency compound. One side of the residency is set apart for the mixed court appointed for adjudicating cases in which British subjects are concerned, and which was established under the treaty of 1867. This year forty-nine mixed cases have been disposed of, and fifteen cases connected only with the political agency. Between five and six thousand rupees have been received for stamps since the establishment of the court last year; and about half of the residents in Mandalay, who were in a position to avail themselves of the court, have already done so. Besides the residency and the doctor's house, there is a

small jail connected with the court, which however is at present without inmates. Now that the rains have subsided, the compound has quite a European appearance. In front of the doctor's house there is a garden, and in front of the residency the ground is covered with grass and shaded with trees. The road through the compound from the gateway to the residency, and indeed all round the residency, is marked by white posts connected with a rope. Major McMahon is allowed a guard of eight lascars, who act as boatmen. Also the King furnishes six so-called soldiers as a guard for the residency. The latter are wretched looking coolies, without the remotest semblance or vestige of a uniform, and only known, like the bulk of Burmese soldiers, by a tattooed mark at the back of the neck. They are armed with muskets, but are not allowed any ammunition.

*Monday, 21st November.*—According to the verbal instructions which I received from General Fytche before I left Rangoon, it was determined that I should not express any wish to visit the King, but should raise objections on the ground that my visit was a private one, and unconnected with political matters ; and that I should delicately hint to the Pakhan Mengyee, or prime minister, that however anxious I might be, as an English gentleman, to pay my respects to a sovereign in cordial alliance with the British government, like the King of Ava, I was restrained by a natural reluctance to kneel on a carpet, and squat down in Burmese fashion, before any earthly potentate. On my arrival however I found that the King had heard of my coming, and expressed to the political agent, as well as to several



other persons, his anxiety to see me; and it was accordingly arranged that I should pay a visit to the palace on the following Wednesday.

The Pakhan Mengyee was unfortunately suffering from illness, but sent a polite message apologising for being unable to call upon me, but declaring that he would do his best to receive me on the occasion of my visit to the palace. I replied that I should have much pleasure in seeing the minister.

In the afternoon paid a visit to the Rev. J. E. Marks, and promised to be present at his school the next day for the presentation of certain prizes.

In the evening Mr. Goldenburg and Father Abbona came to dinner. The latter gentleman has been thirty years at the capital, and is quite a historical character. He is a member of the old Italian Mission, which of late years has been superseded by the French. He is a pleasant old gentleman, full of information about the court; and an admirer of King Tharawadi, whom he described as a despotic tyrant, but every inch a King. Tharawadi was the sovereign who was disgusted at discovering that the treaty with the British government was not concluded with a sovereign, but with the East India Company; in other words that "Goombanee Meng," as the Company was called, was not a King, but a number of merchants, with whom his majesty would have nothing to do. A French gentleman who visited his court, suggested that if his majesty would conclude a treaty with France, the French King would assist him against all his enemies. At this Tharawadi was most indignant. "Help me," he cried,

"Why the King of France ought to ask me to help him: with my army I could conquer all the world." The King then issued orders that the Frenchman should never again be received at his court.

Of late years the court of Ava has acquired some real knowledge of political affairs in Europe; but in the days of King Tharawadi and Louis Philippe, the ideas which were entertained by the Burmese as regards European states were almost mythical. It was supposed that there were two great sovereigns in the world, namely a king of the east and a king of the west. The sovereign of Ava was identified with the king of the east, and the rulers of Siam, the Shan states, and Karennee were regarded as his Tsaubwas, or vassals. The sovereign of Great Britain was supposed to be the king of the west, and it was concluded that the rulers of France, Prussia, Italy, and other European states were his Tsaubwas. The wonderful rise of the French empire under Napoleon the third, and the increased activity of France in the affairs of the east, tended to explode this idea, and drew the attention of the court more particularly to the French nation. The consequence has been that of late years the court of Ava appear to have endeavoured in their oriental diplomacy to pit France against Great Britain. The late crown prince, who was killed in the rebellion of 1866, was fully impressed with this idea. The war between France and Prussia, and its disastrous results to the former nation have tended much to modify this view.

*Tuesday, 22nd November.*—Dr. Williams and Mr. Goss called this morning. About twelve o'clock



I proceeded to the school and residence of the Rev. J. E. Marks, which are situated in a large enclosed compound adjoining the political residency. As it was the Buddhist sabbath, some boys, including the young princes, were absent, but fifty-seven pupils were in attendance. I examined every class, beginning from the highest. The teaching of English, including reading, writing and composition appear to be very efficient. There is no school in Rangoon where the boys are better taught than at this rising institution at Mandalay; and the good understanding which prevailed between Mr. Marks and all the boys in the school was very gratifying. The assistant, Mr. Powel, appears to be efficient and energetic; but Mr. Marks seems to throw his whole soul into the work. Besides English the boys are taught history, geography, arithmetic, mathematics, and Latin. The school has only been established a year and a half, but it has commenced under the happiest auspices, and the success of the institution appears to have been greatly promoted at starting by the transfer of some boys from Mr. Marks's old school at Rangoon. By this measure Mandalay boys, who were naturally ignorant of school discipline, were soon led by example to fall into the regular groove of rule and regulation, which is so necessary for maintaining the efficiency of a school.

After examining all the boys down to the very lowest class, I gave away the presents at Mr. Marks' request, and was glad to hear that the boys had learnt to cheer in the English fashion. Mr. Marks concluded with a speech in the Burmese language, and

then the boys separated for a half holiday given on the occasion.

The building of the school room and dormitories seems to be admirably arranged. At the side is a pretty little chapel in which Mr. Marks conducts daily and weekly services. At some little distance a church is being built at the expense of the King. When completed it will no doubt prove a handsome edifice, but I have considerable doubts as to the expediency of permitting an Asiatic sovereign, who is thoroughly wedded to the Buddhist religion, and who spent some years as a phongyee before ascending the throne, to build a church at his own expense for Christian residents. If the church is wanted it should be paid for by Christians; especially as the King could have no other object in building it, than that of ingratiating himself with the British government. Mr. Marks informed me that his majesty threatened in the event of his (Mr. Marks) leaving Mandalay, he would pull down the church; and there is no reason to doubt that the King would carry out this measure. His majesty has remarked to several persons that the English surpass the Burmese in all the arts and sciences, in everything in fact, excepting religion; but that in religion the Burmese were far superior to any other nation. To those who have familiarized themselves with the leading dogmas of Buddhism, including the doctrine of merits and demerits and an implicit faith in the endless transmigration of the soul, the difficulties in the way of converting an adult Buddhist to Christianity must appear almost insurmountable, unless



lately at the top of the steps, and ushered us into a low room, open to all comers, in which some really good carpets had been laid down. The Pakhan Mengyee is about sixty years of age, with a broad countenance somewhat marked, teeth blackened with age and betel, and a staid demeanour. He at once sat down on the carpet, the political agent sat down, and our little party did the same. All round us were servants and followers prostrating upon their stomachs in all directions. Tea, sugar, pomegranates and little cakes were served to us, and we had a long and friendly talk. Presently the Yaw-Ahtwen-Woon, a minister of the interior, was introduced, and after a few general questions as to my age and other matters, he talked with me about my History of India, and was apparently pleased with some information I supplied him about Kapila-wot, Magadha, and other places in Hindustan, which are celebrated in Buddhist tradition, as well as in Hindoo legend. He then went away to officially report our arrival to the King, and after some twenty minutes or more we were told that the King was ready.

Leaving the Pakhan Mengyee, we passed a gateway through a double line of walls, which form a second line of defence to the palace buildings, and comprise barracks and cannon. On entering this second enclosure there was a garden and a carriage foundry on our right hand, whilst far away to the left was a building set apart for the white elephant. Walking across the enclosure we approached the great Hall, which is only used on solemn occasions, and for the reception of an Ambassador with full powers. It has an imposing appearance from the lavish

carving and rich gilding, which covered the walls and roof as well as the great throne, and the numerous columns which supported the ceiling. We took off our shoes at the foot of the palace steps, and proceeded through some passages and gateways to the hall of audience, known as the Zaydawon Loung, which was formerly painted red, but is now covered with a white plaster, and fully carpeted as on state occasions. We were here received by the Yaw-Ahtwen-Woon, or minister of the interior, who was dressed in white, with the usual silk loongyee, and wore the decoration of the golden tsalway of twelve strands, which presents a handsome and imposing appearance with its golden chains over Burmese costume. After a few minutes we were summoned to the Mhan-gau, or crystal palace, so called because, in addition to the rich gilding already mentioned it is extensively decorated with the pretty work of very small mirrors already noticed as part of the decorations of the war boats. The eye is really dazzled by the mixture of gold and red. Cushions and curtains are all red, and the lower portions of the columns are also painted the same colour, but the rest of the hall is covered with gilding. Here our party sat down on carpets. First was the Yaw-Ahtwen-Woon, next to him was Major McMahon, and then myself, with Mr. Nicholas behind us taking notes. On my left were some commercial gentlemen. All round were numerous officials prostrating themselves with their noses nearly touching the ground. Before us were several large openings in the golden wall leading into the interior apartments, and in



the central opening was a small sofa. After some chatting a low boom was heard, and a perfect silence followed, during which the King appeared and took his seat on the sofa. Before him was a small table on which were boxes of betel and golden pots, brought in by the principal queen and some other ladies. At first these ladies concealed themselves, but as the interview proceeded the queen shewed herself fully to the view, and appeared to be about fifty-six, or rather older than the King.

The King is a pleasant, stout man of fifty-four years of age. He was not above six or seven yards from us, so that it was very easy to see him and to hear him speak. He first took up his opera glass and surveyed us very leisurely, and then began eating betel, which he never ceased doing throughout the whole of the interview, excepting at intervals when he was somewhat excited, and gave emphasis to his views by drawing imaginary lines with his fingers on the table before him. The royal secretary then read aloud our names and offices, and the list of the presents which had been made to the King, and which were spread out before us on the carpet. This was done in a pompous style and with considerable intonation, especially at the conclusion. His majesty then asked how long I had lived in India, and after receiving the necessary information, he asked whether I could convey to the Indian and Home governments the sentiments which he was about to express. I replied that I should have great pleasure in carrying out his majesty's wishes through the regular channel, upon which the

following conversation took place between His majesty and myself, as secretary to General Fytche, the chief commissioner of British Burma, and Major McMahon as political agent.

*King.*—Let the British government be informed that there shall be perpetual peace, and no war between us, as long as I live and reign in Burma. It is also my sincere wish to cement the already existing friendship the more closely, and to see the extension of trade which will benefit both the great countries.

*Secretary.*—What your majesty has been pleased to express is exactly what the British government cordially reciprocates.

*King.*—You are going up to Bhamo, I suppose with McMahon, (*turning round to the political agent*). How long do you intend to remain there?

*Political Agent.*—Only three days your majesty.

*King to the Secretary.*—I have been informed that you have published the history of India. You had better on your return from Bhamo, stay here some time to enable you to procure copies of the ancient histories which I have in my possession concerning India.

*Secretary.*—I am much obliged by the gracious offer of your majesty.

Here followed a long political conversation between the King and myself, which need not be repeated here, but which will be officially communicated to the government of India. The King then introduced the Sa-yay-dau-gyee, a royal secretary of the supreme council, to Major McMahon and myself, and told us that this officer had been instructed to accom-



pany us to Bhamo, and attend to all our wants and comforts. It may here be remarked that this Sa-yay-dau-gyee is also known as the Pangyet Woon; and proved a very pleasant companion during our trip to Bhamo. The interview lasted nearly an hour, and was then brought to a conclusion by the King suddenly rising and taking his departure, on which the principal queen not only shewed herself, but a number of ladies,—inferior queens or ladies in waiting,—took care to get a fair sight of our party and show themselves in return. They were dressed in red dresses, and looked both pretty and saucy as they whisked themselves away.

We then returned to Major McMahon's house somewhat fatigued.

Some of these interviews with the King at Mandalay must be amusing from the incongruities which are occasionally displayed. A few months ago a barrister from Rangoon persisted in being introduced to his majesty in his wig and gown. The court officials were utterly dumb-founded by the wig, whilst the King fairly roared with laughter. At length after full explanations had been requested and received, the King asked what the wig cost. The learned gentleman took the question in a figurative sense, as applicable to the entire cost of his legal education, and replied ten thousand rupees. This reply has puzzled his majesty to the last degree, and to this day he occasionally refers to the extraordinary cost of the marvellous wig.

*Thursday, 24th November.*—We walked over the fields early this morning to the creek, where we em-



barked in Major McMahon's boat for the steamer. The morning was beautifully cool and bright, and the boat running with the stream passed very rapidly over the water, which we had traversed so slowly on our arrival on the preceding Saturday. The war boats especially, and the King's barge, gleamed with dazzling splendour in the morning sunshine. We found a large party on board, amongst whom was the Rev. J. E. Marks, who was proceeding to Bhamo with four of his pupils. The Reverend gentleman proceeded to the steamer with considerable pomp, having been furnished by the King with a gilt war boat for the purpose, which was rowed by sixty men, and made a considerable splash. The additional party at the table on deck comprised Major and Mrs. McMahon, Dr. Williams, the Rev. J. E. Marks, and the pleasant Burmese official, known as the Pangyet Woon, who had been introduced to us by the King on the previous day. The latter title means in Burmese official language "governor of the glass manufactories;" but as there are no glass manufactories whatever in Burma the title appears slightly anomalous.

I have learnt so much respecting upper Burma and the court of Mandalay from the Pangyet Woon, that some slight account of him may not be out of place. He is thirty-five years of age, but from his appearance and manners, he looks some years younger. At eighteen years of age he was sent by the late crown prince to Calcutta to be educated in English at the Doveton college. At that time Dr. George Smith, the late editor of the "Friend of India", was principal of the college; and the

jaws of two large fish. They appeared to have no fear, and permitted themselves to be stroked on the back by any one who liked.

Malay.

*Saturday, 26th November.*—We anchored this morning off a place called Malay in order to take in wood. We are now amongst a people, many of whom have never seen a steamer before. The usual events took place. The Woon, or governor of the village, came on board to pay his respects to the Pangyet Woon, and to offer presents of fish and pumpkin. These Woons are always attended by a considerable number of servants carrying a water pot, Burma cheroots, betel box, and other similar articles, as well as by a body guard armed with muskets or long swords. Besides these official visits, the masses of the people were freely admitted on board the steamer, and went about prying everywhere with eager and wondering eyes. Men, women, children, little boys and girls, babies in arms, all came trooping in; whilst crowds of other strange people, including a caravan of Shans, and a Buddhist nun, in dirty white garments, gazed anxiously at us from the shore. At this place we were informed that the inhabitants placed an inordinate value upon empty bottles. Those which had contained any kind of liquor were highly appreciated, but the passion for soda water bottles is still stronger, whilst there is if possible a deeper yearning for the dark red bottles which have contained hock. As we had a considerable number of empty bottles on board, due perhaps to the geniality of our party since leaving Mandalay, a few were thrown into the water as an experiment, and then commenced one of the most



amusing scrambles that can possibly be imagined. Boys and girls threw off their garments, and dived or swam impetuously after the bottles; not throwing out their arms leisurely, like European swimmers, but paddling like dogs, only much more noisily. Meantime mothers, wives and sweethearts were urging on the competition for the bottles, and carrying them away in triumph immediately they were brought on shore, or safely landed on one or other of the numerous canoes that were plying about the steamer. Mr. Marks gave away some religious books and tracts, but they were regarded as things of small value in comparison with the bottles. One elderly official who accepted a book endeavoured to make a little capital by it. He assured Mr. Marks that he was anxious to peruse the work, and would do so directly he got home, provided that gentleman would favour him with a pair of spectacles, as without spectacles he could not read the print.

The beauty of the scenery after leaving this place was very striking. The windings of the river, the deep shade of the foliage, and the glass-like surface of the water, were very pleasing to the eye, and occasionally recalled some localities in European streams.

The nights are getting colder than ever, thermometer ranging from 57 degrees to 60. The days however are still pleasantly warm. In the afternoon we arrived at a picturesque little place called Htee Kyine. Htee Kyine. On the right was a hill and pagodas. Before us was a sandy reach with foliage beyond; and on this reach, a wooden shed was erected, and preparations



were evidently being made for a poey, or Burmese theatrical entertainment. Having never seen a poey, we all landed about sunset, with the exception of Major and Mrs. McMahon and Mr. Marks, to see the performance; and I was glad to obtain all the information and explanation necessary from the Pang-yet Woon.

The main story of the majority of Burmese dramas is that of a prince who goes on foreign travel, and falls in love with the daughter of the King of some distant country; but, as the course of true love never runs smooth, the union is deferred for a long period in consequence of difficulties arising out of the opposition of the parents on either side. The scenes change from the palace to the forest and back again as the story progresses; and the entertainment is spread over an incredible length of time, occasionally four or five days, by choruses of ministers or ladies, interspersed with dancing and singing, and the occasional introduction of nats, or guardian deities, and beloos, or demons; so that after sitting a few hours, even the most curious European observer becomes somewhat wearied.

The piece we saw was what might be called a low comedy, being especially intended for the amusement of the populace. The young ladies and wags and dancers of the village had been for some time engaged in preparing the performance, which was not originally intended for our benefit; but for enlivening a feast which was about to be celebrated. As however the steamer had arrived with Burmese and English officials the local authorities appear to have deter-

mined to compliment us with a sort of dress rehearsal. Under the shed a platform covered with cushions and carpets was reserved for visitors; but the Pangyet Woon kindly ordered chairs to be brought for our party. Before us was a space, about fifteen yards square, covered with mats for the performance of the drama; and this was lighted by lamps and candles hanging from the roof, or attached to the poles which supported it. On one side of this area were the orchestra and green room, which deserve especial notice. The music consisted of nondescript pipes, but the main instrument consisted of a big drum shaped like the cask of Bacchus, and beaten at one end. Besides this drum there was a strange sort of small enclosure, in which a man was engaged in hammering a number of small gongs of different sizes, so as to represent a scale. The green room was a mere name, as all the mysteries of dressing and decoration are carried on with the most primitive simplicity before all the spectators. Around the sheds were crowds of eager spectators; and a more enthusiastic and appreciative audience could scarcely be conceived. Indeed the whole scene seemed to resemble in a small way the celebration of the Dionysia festival, when the people of Athens went about in masquerade, out of pure love of fun; and performed one of those rude comedies, which were in vogue in the age preceding the rise of the real Greek drama.

After we had taken our seats, and the audience and performers, male and female, had lighted their long Burmese cheroots, the performance commenced with a somewhat jangling fantasia from the orches-



tra. Then a chorus of about twenty or thirty women came in, dressed in Burmese petticoats with large yellow handkerchiefs, which they wore like shawls. This part of the performance consisted of a musical but metallic kind of chant, with measured steps, and much graceful waving of the arms and handkerchiefs. Then entered two dancing girls with spangled petticoats and silk handkerchiefs, who were adorned with a multiplicity of necklaces, and who began the regular oriental dance with a far greater amount of demonstrative gesture than was displayed in the choral dances ; advancing and retreating and singing the whole time, and placing their slight forms in the most ludicrous postures. Presently they imitated the actions of monkeys, and scratched their heads, and performed other indescribable antics, in a manner at once saucy and intensely amusing. Indeed our little party laughed almost as much as the Burmese audience, who fairly roared at the more striking absurdities. Next the girls imitated the action of cultivating rice, and preparing it ; and then fought one another with a mirthful abandon, which brought down shouts of merriment. Then four actors representing the four principal Woons, or ministers of State, came in and commenced dancing and singing. After this two buffoons entered and were followed by four ladies of the court ; and then there was more dialogue and dancing, and most amusing bye plays between the ladies and the buffoons. One of the buffoons had made secret love to each of the four ladies in turn, and was then reproached by each for his want of fidelity ; and finally all four discovered the full extent of his perfidy, and beat and abused him in the most approved style.



Then a prince came in, and a host of ministers and courtiers fell prostrate before him, and expressed their admiration of every sentence he uttered. The prince was dressed in shining clothes to represent a coat of mail, and wore a very extraordinary hat. But by this time it was past eleven o'clock, and most of us returned to the steamer; but continued to hear the chanting and dancing, and frequent shouts of laughter, until a very late hour.

*Sunday, 27th November.*—Mr. Marks conducted divine service on deck, and then preached a short sermon.

*Monday, 28th November.*—The morning was fine and fresh, and a great crowd came on board, including many of the performers of the previous evening. The bottle fun was renewed to the entire satisfaction of the ladies and boys; and then we steamed away through very pleasant scenery, carrying with us the Woon and a select party for a few miles, in order to give them a trip in the wonderful fire-boat.

In the evening we anchored off a village named Kah-tate. Kah-tate, and were entertained, not with a regular poey, but with the choral performance of the young women of the village. The proceedings were of a very simple character, and a mere repetition of what was done at the opening of the poey on a previous evening. About thirty young women stood up in lines of six or seven. A prima donna led the chant, and they all moved their arms to the cadences of the music, or turned half round and presented themselves sideways, or faced us, slanting themselves from side to side. When one set of ladies had finished another came on, and went through precisely the

same performances. The entertainment was thus somewhat monotonous, and in the absence of any acting or buffooning grew wearisome. Indeed the principal charm lay in the graceful movements of modest young women, some of whom were really pretty, and many of whom were married ; but there was no affectation or boldness, and no laughing beyond a concealed smile, and the performance was as innocent as the play of young children. The orchestra was very defective, and consisted chiefly of a gong, a hammer, and a clanging of something like little cymbals.

We returned to the steamer about nine o'clock, much gratified with the simple efforts which had been made to please the party. About an hour or two afterwards, whilst sitting alone on the deck with the Pangyet Woon, a deputation from the village came on board to complain that one of our party had been firing a musket on shore. We were extremely annoyed, and so was Major McMahon when he heard of it, but it appears to have been a mere thoughtless act of the officer of the steamer. He had gone ashore with two of the passengers, and taken his gun with him, and fired it off simply because it had been loaded for some time. Amongst however the villages in upper Burma, the firing of a gun at night is regarded as a warning that dacoits are approaching ; and the inhabitants are accustomed to arouse themselves on hearing the signal, and to collect their valuables with all speed, and run away to the jungle. The offending party at once explained what he had done, and got several severe lectures ; and as the matter



was thus cleared up, nothing more is likely to be heard of it.

*Tuesday, 29th November.*—This morning the usual presents of fish, rice, and vegetables were brought to the steamer, and another party of villagers was treated with a short trip in the marvellous fire-boat.

The scenery continued to be varied and interesting, but nothing transpired worthy of particular notice.

In the evening we anchored off a place named Shwè-goo. Shwè-goo. The Khyouk-myo Woon, or governor of six townships, came on board, with the usual number of retainers and presents. Major McMahon observed that it was impossible on this occasion to refuse to accept the baskets, as such a course would have greatly offended both the local authorities and the court at Mandalay. He however took the opportunity of suggesting to the Pangyet Woon that a repetition of such presents on future voyages would be contrary to English custom, and that a little rice or a few flowers, or a little milk would alone be acceptable.

*Wednesday, 30th November.*—The Khyouk-myo Woon has turned out to be a character. He was appointed to guard an outpost in the neighbourhood of Rangoon during the second Burmese war in 1852, and was prepared to defend the place; but according to his own account “when Commodore Lambert came against him, and fired his bomb balls at him, he ran away, as he could not be expected to fight against so great a man as Commodore Lambert.”



His age was fifty-seven, and he had the reputation of having a large zenana. He gravely asked a European gentleman on board, how many Burmese wives he had in addition to his European one. Like other Woons he took his meals with the party, and drank two glasses of sherry with a queer expression as though he did not like the beverage.

About eleven o'clock this morning we entered the second defile, which is about fifteen miles in length. The scenery of this defile, or gorge, surpasses anything I have ever beheld. The river narrows in, whilst the banks on either side rise to a height of from five to eight hundred feet, and are covered with thick woods. The most striking part of the defile, is a huge rock, which is called "monkey castle" from the number of monkeys that hang about it. This is a vast perpendicular mass, rising apparently at least eight hundred feet above the glass-like river. It is impossible to describe our impressions of the grandeur of this wonderful defile. During the couple of hours we were passing through there was a continual change. Sometimes the stream took a winding course between the elevated and precipitous banks with their towering forests. At other places we came upon a long vista of wood and stream. Here and there was a pagoda, or a village, or a few fishermen in a boat. On the whole I do not remember any scene so calculated to please and astonish the eye, not by rude wild precipices, but by glorious heights crowned with forests, and throwing their dark shades upon the smooth waters.

Below Bhamo.

This evening we anchored just below Bhamo.

But for the thick fog, which hung over the river during a great part of the morning, we should have reached the place; but as it was we could dimly see the houses in the distance, with the grand range of the Kachyen Hills beyond. Major McMahon received a letter from Captain Strover, which contained amongst other information the fact that the latter gentleman had been without cheroots for a month. It was also understood that provisions were at a very low ebb, and indeed Captain Strover wrote that he should regard the "Colonel Fytche" as coming to the relief of Bhamo.

Being Major McMahon's birth-day, and having nearly arrived at the end of our outward voyage, the evening was past in festivity, and may be a song or two. At any rate a Chinaman on the flat was heard next day to make a laudable effort to sing. "we won't go home till morning." As he could remember only the words, "won't, home, morning," and moreover seemed to give them utterance only after very deep cogitation, the effect was somewhat ludicrous.

*Thursday, 1st December.*—This morning five long boats appeared in the distance bringing the officiating Woon, the Tseekay, and some other officials, to pay their respects to the political agent. Unfortunately the boat containing the Woon, and about thirty rowers, was carried by the current past the steamer, just as part of the bank fell in. The boat was swamped at once, but did not go down entirely, although everybody on board was under water. The boats of the steamer at once started off to the res-

His age was fifty-seven, and he had the reputation of having a large zenana. He gravely asked a European gentleman on board, how many Burmese wives he had in addition to his European one. Like other Woons he took his meals with the party, and drank two glasses of sherry with a queer expression as though he did not like the beverage.

About eleven o'clock this morning we entered the second defile, which is about fifteen miles in length. The scenery of this defile, or gorge, surpasses anything I have ever beheld. The river narrows in, whilst the banks on either side rise to a height of from five to eight hundred feet, and are covered with thick woods. The most striking part of the defile, is a huge rock, which is called "monkey castle" from the number of monkeys that hang about it. This is a vast perpendicular mass, rising apparently at least eight hundred feet above the glass-like river. It is impossible to describe our impressions of the grandeur of this wonderful defile. During the couple of hours we were passing through there was a continual change. Sometimes the stream took a winding course between the elevated and precipitous banks with their towering forests. At other places we came upon a long vista of wood and stream. Here and there was a pagoda, or a village, or a few fishermen in a boat. On the whole I do not remember any scene so calculated to please and astonish the eye, not by rude wild precipices, but by glorious heights crowned with forests, and throwing their dark shades upon the smooth waters.

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cue, and in due course every one was saved and brought on board. Five of the men swam to the bank on the first occurrence of the accident. Two men managed to reach the summit of the bank, but the other three were less fortunate. They had nearly gained the height when the earth gave way, and they fell backwards in the water ; but they escaped along the foot of the bank, and the incident only excited a smile.

The channel is very difficult. There are even some doubts whether we shall reach Bhamo at all, although we are within sight of it. Captain Bacon is having the river sounded in all directions, as he is determined not to risk his steamer by any premature movements. Still dissatisfied at the unexpected shallowness of the waters, and apparent closing of the channel, he has spent some hours in personally sounding the river. At last after much anxiety he conducted us safely to an anchorage at the side of the town, about a quarter past two o'clock in the afternoon.

Bhamo.

Bhamo is a very ordinary looking village from the river. It is said to contain some four or five hundred houses, and about four or five thousand inhabitants, consisting of Burmese, Shans and Chinese. It is situated at the top of a high bank, whilst the opposite shore is a dreary waste of sand, with a green fringe beyond, backed by a ridge of hills. The tall dark Kachyen hills are to be seen in the distance beyond Bhamo. Captain Strover, the assistant political agent, came on board, together with a couple of intelligent but dirty Kachyens, one of whom had

been to Bengal and was named Lalloo. This latter gentleman had a sort of silver chatelaine on his shoulder, from which was suspended queer silver hooks for doing something to the ears, nose, and teeth. It had been given to him by the chief of Momein. Some of our party went ashore ; but most of us deferred our visit till next morning.

*Friday, 2nd December.*—Went ashore about seven o'clock A. M., and proceeded along a nondescript road, consisting partly of mud, and partly of small rude paving stones and brick. The latter materials are necessary to render communication possible during the rains. Riding on ponies would not be easy, and any kind of wheeled vehicle could only be moved with great difficulty. Accordingly we walked to the residence of Captain Strover, which was nearly a mile from the place of anchorage, and outside what may be called the stockade which surrounds the town. On either side of our walk within the town were detached Burman houses of bamboo and matting ; and the inhabitants including Shans and Burmese, regarded us with the keenest interest. The dogs also took a lively curiosity in our proceedings, and seemed under the impression that the introduction of civilization into Bhamo was not conducive to the true interests of pariah puppies. The stockade, or wooden wall round the town, consists of a number of teak poles set upright close together, and bound together with teak joists. It is about fifteen feet high, and is chiefly intended as a protection against robbers and tigers ; but some time back a tiger managed to scale it and carry away a woman. Tigers infest the neighbourhood, and Captain Strover had been awakened only a few nights before our ar-



rival by a noisy contest between a tiger and a buffaloe. The stockade is surrounded on the outside by a ditch, and there are great wooden gates at every entrance to the town, which are shut every night, and guarded by dirty looking soldiers. At the gate through which we passed on our way to the residency, were two of these fellows in a wretched hut. Before the hut were three or four old muskets, and a small rusty ginjal, or little gun, about the size of a moveable garden pump. The muzzle was covered with some brown looking leaves, and it was evident the piece of ordnance was employed more to terrify than as a real protection. The two heavy wooden gates moved on great wooden rollers. We passed over some planks which covered the ditch, and also walked over a long wooden bridge, which we are told is always carried away during the rains. At length we reached the so-called residency, which is at present little more than a hut of bamboos and matting, but comprises a sitting room, bed room, and verandah. A handsome wooden building is however in course of construction, and will be finished, it is expected, about the end of next March.

The life of the assistant political agent at Bhamo is by no means an enviable one. Every day he is visited by chiefs and other strangers of all kinds, who have their talk and go away; but seven months have passed since he saw a European. Captain Strover seems to take things very easily, and nothing apparently would disturb his equanimity, but he admits that sometimes he feels a little dull. He has been for a long time without cheroots. He is never able to procure beef or mutton. Fowls and milk are his

chief, and generally his only diet. He has had no bread for the last seven months, and no tea for two months. Fortunately he has enjoyed perfect health the whole time he has been at Bhamo. The residency ground is a mere piece of waste land extending over an area of two or three acres, and enclosed with bamboo matting. His escort consists of about twelve or fifteen men who reside in huts. Other huts have been set aside for a cow, elephant and ponies. A strange crowd of Kachyen chiefs and followers gathered around our party, and seemed to be a set of happy, but somewhat dirty looking fellows. One or two had traces of gashes on their faces, which they had probably received in some hill fray. One shining character led in a fine pony, for which he asked a thousand rupees. The mere mention of the price demanded threw the crowd into fits of laughter, and the amount asked for rapidly fell down to a hundred rupees. Probably the dealer would have taken eighty rupees, but nobody seemed disposed to give more than seventy-five, so the bargain fell through. The pony must have been only recently brought from the hills, for he was in fearful alarm at the sight of a European, and would have indulged in a little kicking if approached without due caution.

We returned to the steamer for breakfast, after which both the steamer and flat were crowded with men, women, boys, girls, and babies ;—dirty Kachyens, broad-faced Chinese, China women with small infants and still smaller feet, cheerful Shans and Burmese of all colours. Whilst I am writing successive relays of people are curiously watching my proceedings, and apparently commenting freely

upon them in unknown tongues. One young gentleman, who has never had his hair brushed during his life, is eagerly looking over my shoulder. Amongst the more extraordinary characters is a little bald headed Buddhist nun, who says she is thirty-five years of age, and we have ascertained that she is just three feet nine inches high, having carefully measured her against one of the piece goods. She is a very friendly dwarf, but very ugly. She brought presents of walnuts and pumpkins, and has been rewarded with rupees, and above all with a little dogskin jacket, which she wears with great satisfaction. The jacket fits her very well, although made for Miss Ethel McMahon a year ago, when that young lady was at the age of six. Shortly after receiving the gift, the nun sewed up the jacket in front ; partly to prevent anybody from taking it away, and partly it is believed from a determination to wear it until death. The little daughter of Major McMahon has taken a great fancy to her, and even gone so far as to offer her a swing in a juvenile contrivance which has been hung upon deck. The nun, although very accommodating, is not prepared to undergo the ordeal. She smokes cheroots with great satisfaction, and lights them with lucifer matches in a masterly manner.

About noon a grand assembly of about forty Kachyen chiefs came on board to pay their respects to the political agent, and to see a steamer for the first time. Some of the jungle chiefs are well built men, and apparently frank and open ; but their civilization is of a very low type. In religion they propitiate the *genius loci*, the spirit of the hill, the stream, or the village. Each one is virtually the so-



vereign of his own little territory, and possesses the power of life and death. They are engaged in constant frays, chiefly on account of the old system of debts, which are often the sources of hereditary feuds through many generations. These are the points in dispute which are being constantly referred to Captain Strover. The Kachyens speak a peculiar language of their own, but have no written language. The political agent presented each one with a piece of muslin, with which they were apparently well pleased. One of them mentioned "brandy" as a sort of passing suggestion, but Major McMahon failed to take the hint.

Some Kachyen ladies came on board attired in all the grotesque decorations which appear to be the fashion in the hills. They had waist bands of white shells, and of thin black lacquered rings. They wore about twenty or thirty of these rings, and took off several to show us. The married ladies had silver plates dangling from their ears about three inches square and covered with some strange figures. Most of the ladies had holes perforated in their ears in which they wore a large and long silver tube, bearing a marvellous resemblance in size and appearance to a tin pea-shooter. The unmarried ladies wore a thick red brush stuck in one end of the pea-shooter, which, together with their display of unbrushed hair, was a sort of hint that they were open to a proposal; for in the Kachyen world of fashion the ladies never comb or brush their hair until after they are married, but exhibit their unkempt hair in huge rough masses which have never been anointed with oil or fragrant waters. The married ladies are said

to dress their hair a little, and at any rate wear a head dress of a rude fashion. Neither the married nor unmarried ladies can be regarded as handsome.

Major McMahon endeavoured to take the portraits of some of the ladies, but the task was surrounded with difficulty. In the first instance they declined to sit unless they were supplied with something to drink. They expressed a strong preference for brandy, but this was refused on moral and prudential grounds. Two bottles of beer were then placed before them, when another complication arose. They could not open the bottles. It was said that only one cork screw had ever been seen in the Hills, and that this had been worshipped as a deity. Moreover they apparently laboured under the impression that if they carried away the beer, their gentlemen friends would exercise an arrogant prerogative over the weaker sex by drinking the beer themselves. No alternative was thus left but to open the bottles, and allow the ladies to drink the beer on the spot. Tin pots were produced in the shape of tins used for preserved provisions, with the labels still fresh upon them. Two of the more experienced ladies drank off their beer with great gusto. One solemn young lady drank more than her share, and was soundly thumped by her companions for such a violation of good manners. A still younger dryad was more suspicious. She was evidently ignorant of the flavour of beer, and therefore took a small taste at first, which meeting with approval was followed by a considerable draught. But the attempt at portraiture proved a failure notwithstanding the beer. The ladies would not sit still, and the crowd became very

pressing and noisy. So the drawing materials were laid aside in despair.

Not only in the morning, but throughout the day until nearly sunset, the steamer and flat were crowded with people of all sorts and persuasions. All Bhamo seemed to have taken a holiday to see the wonderful fire-boat, especially as it was accompanied by a flat which had never previously been beheld in Bhamo.

In the evening we took a walk in the China quarter accompanied by Mr. Marks. Our way led through long streets with pavings of stone, brick and timber planking, which did not cover the whole of the roadway, but formed a sort of paved path running along the middle of the road. Dogs barked at us from the houses and recesses on either side, but gave way at our approach. The people were all civil, although a little curious. The place is filled and surrounded with pagodas; whilst a great Chinese temple, with incense ever burning before images of Fo, but otherwise somewhat neglected, remains as a monument of the old trade with China, which eighteen years ago was carried on by the caravans. This temple is almost deserted now, but its walls and resting places, its large court yards paved with flat stones, and spacious theatre, can recall the days when Bhamo was a wealthy emporium. The great problem as regards Bhamo is whether this trade can ever be restored by re-opening the abandoned route, which in former years ran over the Kachyen hills towards western China. The route over the hills could now be opened with ease, thanks to the good understanding



which has been established by Captain Strover with the Kachyen chiefs. But western China is unsafe. Some eighteen years ago a Mussulman colony, known as the Panthays, which had for centuries been settled in the province of Yunan, and been tolerably faithful servants of the Chinese emperor, suddenly broke out into open rebellion, defeated the Chinese authorities and established themselves in the city of Talifoo. But though the Panthays have defeated the Chinese in the open field, the latter encouraged several robber chiefs to harass the Panthays and keep the roads closed. When order is restored, and the Panthays and Chinese settle down as friendly neighbours, the old caravans from western China may be expected to come down to Bhamo; and then there will be great rejoicings in this trading city, for prosperity will flow into it from all quarters. Silks, furs and tea will be brought to Bhamo, and piece goods and hardware will be carried back to the far off city of Talifoo.

Under existing circumstances Bhamo has been dwindling away. History has repeated here in this remote quarter, precisely what has befallen the great cities of the ancient world. When the Romans obtained possession of the Mediterranean trade, Tyre and Sidon passed into nothingness. When the land route through the Arabian desert was abandoned for the water route through the Red Sea, Petra and Edom became a howling wilderness. Whether Bhamo is to become a mere fishing village, or is once again to become an emporium of trade, depends upon whether the Panthays and Chinese can become friendly neighbours.

*Saturday, 3rd December.*—The night has been

very cold. Thermometer about fifty-six on board the steamer, and fifty-two on land. Crowds of people came pouring in as usual.

The Kachyen interpreter, named MOUNG MOH, came on board. This is the man who is said to have discovered the efforts to injure Major Sladen and his party during the expedition of 1868. Some of the party declared that he was a villain, but opinions were divided. He seemed very proud of the notoriety he had attained. He said that his name had been printed in all the newspapers, and that all the English ministers, high and low, were acquainted with it. We all promised to remember him, which he appeared to consider very satisfactory.

About eleven o'clock A. M. Major McMahon and Captain Strover set off to pay a friendly visit to the acting governor or Woondouk, and I had the pleasure of accompanying them. The morning was now warm, but we still found it necessary to wear thick woollen clothing and flannel shirts, although large umbrellas were carried over us as a protection against the sun. We walked for about half a mile along the street with a paved road in the centre, like that already described, and at last reached the Woondouk's house. The yard in front of it appeared to cover about an acre, but behind it was a large garden, which we did not visit. The whole area is surrounded by a strong fence of bamboo matting. A guard house was situated by the gateway with a few soldiers. There were muskets and spears, and a thin iron ginjal like the one we had seen at the town gate. Crossing the court yard we ascended a flight of wooden steps, and were cordially receiv-

ed by the Woondouk, who with the other officials were evidently pleased with our visit. The large hall of audience was constructed of timber and bamboo matting; and thick carpets were spread out on which we sat in Burmese fashion, and of course without taking off our shoes. We were regaled with some good tea, and smoked together in a very friendly fashion, and talked upon different subjects. Beside the hall was a large covered enclosure, which had only been erected during the last two years, and was intended for public entertainments, of which there was to be one that evening. After half an hour we took our departure, and returned to the steamer.

After dinner all our party, excepting Mrs. McMahon and Mr. Marks, went ashore to see the great poey, at the Woondouk's house. The place was lighted, partly by candles hung in glass globes from the ceiling, and partly by great flaming torches stuck in the ground, which were fed with oil from time to time. We were seated in chairs upon a carpeted platform. Below and before us was a large open space for the performers, with the usual tree stuck in the ground to represent a forest. The audience was so large that it seemed as if all Bhamo had come out to see the poey. Eager faces in many rows gleamed merrily in the glare of the torches, and the scene was as genial as any I had ever witnessed.

These poeys are really extraordinary performances. The people take an interest in them which at first is unintelligible to Europeans, but which may be



ascribed to a popular element which is not to be found amongst either Europeans or Hindoos, but which no doubt found expression in the Greek drama. Thus at Bhamo there are six quarters or divisions of the town. Each division has its own chorus of young women, and at every play each chorus appears in turn, singing and moving in slow cadences. There is thus a competition between the several choruses, each one striving to surpass the other ; whilst the audience, is largely composed of husbands, lovers, fathers and brothers. Under such circumstances the drama, which after a while appears to us inexpressibly wearisome, is one of deep personal anxiety to all the native lookers on, who are generally anxious that the chorus belonging to their own particular quarter of the town should surpass all others, and also individually anxious that a wife, a sweetheart, a daughter or a sister should appear to the best advantage.

When these interminable choruses are over the four chief ministers at court appear upon the scene ; and here some highly popular buffoonery is introduced of a professional character. Two buffoons appear in the character of chiefs of wild tribes, ignorant, rude and clumsy to the last degree. They are clamorous for some redress, and indulge in antics, and make their obeisances and prostrations in such an absurd fashion, as to bring down roars of laughter. Moreover they astonish the ministers with the loudness of their complaints, and are rebuked accordingly. The ministers on the other hand exhibit a burlesque dignity and indifference, which is intended as a satire on Burmese official life, and is of course received with bursts of merriment. Then one buffoon hill chief,

who is apparently driven out of all sense of propriety by the utter want of sympathy with which his petition is received, suddenly lays hold of a minister, and bangs him about until he falls down dead. After this the girls make their appearance as maids of honour, and play every conceivable freak, either as monkeys, scratching their heads, and peeling plantains ; or as something else rendered equally as absurd by significant grimaces or wonderful contortions of the body. Then follows the prince, and more talking and haranguing. Meantime all the speeches and dialogues are sparkling with puns, which of course are only intelligible to those who are thoroughly familiar with Burmese, and of which the language is said to be especially capable.

I was fortunate enough to sit next the Panyet Woon, who had accompanied us from Mandalay, and who kindly explained every thing that could be explained ; but understanding that the first night's performance would last until three or four o'clock in the morning, and then would only comprise a small portion of the play, we broke up about half past eleven and returned to the steamer, after a friendly parting from all our Burmese friends.

The walk back was very pleasant. Lights were carried before us in glass globes, whilst a little moon was shining. The long streets were perfectly quiet, excepting that occasionally a guardian dog barked or growled ; and notwithstanding the remoteness of the place, there was no more show of danger than if we had been walking in London or Calcutta.

*Sunday, 4th December.*—To-day the steamer was comparatively quiet. Mr. Marks conducted divine

service on the deck, as on the previous Sunday. Being rather tired did not go on shore, and so the day passed away without incident.

*Monday, 5th December.*—Major McMahon paid a visit to the Woondouk before breakfast; and about ten o'clock the Woondouk paid us a return visit, bringing me a present of rice and walnuts. Made over the rice to the servants as usual, and brought away the walnuts, which are very good and cheap at Bhamo. The Woondouk was polite enough to say that he should always be a friend of mine, and I naturally reciprocated the sentiment in the warmest manner.

A little after twelve o'clock we steamed away for <sup>Bhamo to Mandalay.</sup> Mandalay. A large number of passengers had come on board out of curiosity, but all Bhamo appeared to have turned out on the shore to witness our departure. The people were of all ages and sizes, and by sweeping our opera glass over the crowd we could perceive the delighted curiosity, which appeared on every face, to see the mysterious paddle wheels turn round in the water, and the steamer and flat, linked together by some magic tie, move away from the shore towards Mandalay and Rangoon. At length the moment of departure came; trees, houses, and crowded faces disappeared from our view, and we were once again on the calm waters, proceeding with great rapidity down the stream.

After a mile or two the steamer ran aground, but after some hours was towed off the sand bank by a process which is called kedging. A boat went out about a hundred and fifty yards, and cast an anchor



in deep water, to which an iron chain was attached which connected it with the steamer. All hands then worked at the windlass to drag the steamer towards the anchor, and after the usual shoving and shouting, the object was achieved, and we steamed away in deep water. At night we anchored just at the entrance of the second defile.

*Tuesday, 6th December.*—This morning there was a thick cold fog which clouded the whole scene ; but about half past eight o'clock it cleared away before the bright sun, and we entered the second defile. The scenery appeared to even greater advantage than on our upward journey. The morning shone gaily on the tops of the wood-covered heights on either side ; and the long dark shadows on the water, and the winding character of the river, added greatly to the beauty of the vista, and occasionally seemed to shut us in. The tall precipitous side of the monkey castle conveyed also a clearer idea of the height of the green covered eminences which towered around us. Altogether the sight was one I had never seen before, and perchance never shall see again.

Amongst the native passengers are some of the strongest and lustiest Shan men and women I had ever beheld. Stout round-faced people with open countenances, more like burly Englishmen than Asiatics. Saw two of them fasten rags to long strings, and drop them in the river, and then draw them up again, and wash their faces with them. One fellow's rag slipped off the string and floated away to his great wonderment and concern ; but on hearing us laugh, both he and his friend laughed heartily too. It is

evident that these Shans are as happy and good tempered as they appear to be.

*Wednesday and Thursday, 7th and 8th December.*

—The weather during these two days was cold, and therefore so far pleasant. But a return voyage is always tedious. Nothing to see but what has been seen already. Even the beautiful river palls on the eye. Every body on board is apparently anxious to get to Mandalay, if not to Rangoon.

*Friday, 9th December.*—We are to reach Manda- Mengoon, lay this afternoon, but before doing so, we are to land at Mengoon to see the famous mass of brickwork constructed by Bhodau Phra, the great grandfather of the present King, as well as the great bell. Reached Mengoon about one o'clock, and after tiffin we all went on shore in boats. Climbing up an eminence we saw in the first instance the great bell. This is said to be the largest bell in the world with the exception of the one at Moscow. Great Tom of Oxford, the great bell at St. Paul's, and Big Ben at Westminster, are mere hand bells in comparison with this big fellow at Mengoon. The latter is twelve feet high, and more than sixteen feet in diameter at the lip, and could easily contain twenty people. We all got easily underneath it. There is no clapper, as in former times it was beaten from without. It emits no sound now. It is still slung from a great beam by a huge copper hook or sling; but the hook has given way, and the bell now rests upon some blocks of wood carved in strange grotesque figures. The thickness of the metal of the bell varies from six inches to twelve, and the actual weight of the bell is about ninety tons.



After the big bell we went to see a curious pagoda rising in seven parapets of a snake-like form, like the ancient cities of Lanka and Ecbatana, only that there was no difference of colour in the parapets. Last of all we visited the vast masses of brickwork which Bhodau Phra spent twenty years in erecting. This King died in 1819 without completing the structure, and in 1831 it was fractured to its foundations by a great earthquake which also loosened the big bell. This enormous pile rises only 165 feet from the ground, but it comprises between six and seven millions of feet of solid brickwork. One of our party climbed to the summit, and described the whole building as being cracked and loosened in all directions. Stacks of bricks and fragments of scaffolding still remain as they were left by the bricklayers some twenty or thirty years before the earthquake. In front of the structure are two large colossal stone lions, or elephants, or griffins, about forty feet high ; but it is impossible to say what they really are as both their heads are off.

After a long walk in the sun we returned to the steamer very tired.

Mandalay.

Arrived at Mandalay about four o'clock in the afternoon. In the evening Major and Mrs. McMahon landed, and we were to follow next morning.

Here we heard the extraordinary news that Russia had renounced the treaty of 1856, and that the English fleet had been sent to the Black sea. Next morning we had reason to believe that the rumour was an exaggeration.



*Saturday, 10th December.*—Proceeded early in the morning to the hospitable home of the political agent, and were very glad of the day's rest and comfort. Heard some capital stories from Mr. Jones, who appears to have had an original and somewhat successful way of dealing with the native officials, declining to treat with them excepting on easy and equal terms. On one occasion a Burmese official of high rank asserted his dignity by speaking in a loud voice, and leaning his head on one side; whereupon Mr. Jones bellowed out that it was "all right" in still louder tones, and stuck his head on the other side. Ever since they have been very good friends. Heard the story of a visit paid by a number of young Chinese nobles, or princes, on board a man of war, on which occasion one of the sailors went up to the Captain, and touched his hat and said:—"If you please Sir, there's one of these here kings been and tumbled down the hatchway."

*Sunday, 11th December.*—A day of complete rest. In the evening a messenger came from the Pakhan Mengyee, or prime minister, to state that the King wished to see us on the following morning, and we accordingly agreed to pay a farewell visit to his majesty.

*Monday, 12th December.*—Proceeded with Major McMahon to pay a visit to the palace. The interview was of a similar character to the previous one, excepting that it was much longer, lasting from half past eleven o'clock until two. We did not see the Pakhan Mengyee as he was suffering from sickness. The following extract from the notes taken on the

occasion will convey a pretty general idea of the conversation which was carried on during the interview with the King :—

*His Majesty.*—Were you pleased with the reception, and did you all enjoy yourselves on your way to Bhamo and back to the royal city?

*Secretary and Political Agent.*—Both said that they and all on board were much pleased with all they had seen, as well as with the marked attention and kindness, which had been shown them by the officials, and for which they were grateful to his majesty.

*King.*—I believe McMahon has been there already twice?

*Political Agent.*—Thrice your majesty, including this trip.

*King to the Secretary.*—I suppose you have by this time judged, and found out by personal observation and experience, that there is no hindrance to free trade. I do assure you that I am very anxious to see the gold and silver road opened as soon as possible. I have done all that lies in my power to promote commerce and trade for the welfare of the subjects of both the great countries of England and Burma.

*Secretary.*—All that we saw during our recent voyage has convinced us that your majesty has cordially co-operated in the efforts of the British government to re-open the old trade route through your majesty's dominions with the people of Yunnan; and I have not the least doubt that in course of time the



trade with south-west China will increase, and will thus promote the prosperity of the subjects of both the great countries.

*King.*—Do you remember the subject of the conversation we had at our last interview, regarding which I particularly requested you to take notes of what I said for submission to your government?

*Secretary.*—I do remember and have already minuted the same.

*King.*—Please to repeat the substance briefly.

*Secretary.*—It is the sincere wish of your majesty to remain on the best friendly terms with the English government; that there will be no war but peace between the two great friendly powers during your majesty's reign; and that your majesty takes an especial interest in furthering commerce for the welfare of the subjects of both the great countries of England and Burma.

*King.*—Good: write and let your government know my sentiments, and let General Fytche be also informed of the same.

*Secretary.*—I shall have much pleasure in duly reporting what has passed to General Fytche.

*King.*—My predecessors contracted royal friendship with the sovereign ruler of China, by which a gold and silver road was opened for the prosperity both of Burma and China. I did the same with the English sovereign ruler and entered into a treaty. I have done all I could to resuscitate trade between Burma and China, and have also assisted English



merchants who placed themselves under my protection. I did so with a view of pleasing the English government, but I cannot say whether the English government is pleased with it, or not.

*Secretary.*—Your majesty's efforts to protect the persons and property of all English subjects in your majesty's dominions, are duly appreciated by the British government.

*King to the Secretary.*—It is a pity the usages, customs and notions of the English and Burmese are so different from each other; it is thus difficult for one to please the other. When Chinese ambassadors come to Burma, they are honoured with rank, title, insignia and offices. The same is done to Burmese ambassadors when they go to China. There is reciprocity. Real friendship towards one another is shown and proven by acts and deeds openly, and not merely by words. I had a mind to show my partiality to the English by conferring decorations, but I have been told that English officers are not allowed to accept any honorary title or decoration even from a friendly sovereign. There can be no real friendship when such restrictions are enforced. It is an immemorial usage and privilege of sovereign rulers to honour those who are deserving of honour; it would be considered an affront if any person refused a royal favour. I am very anxious to forward decorations and other royal marks of friendship and favour, as tokens of esteem and good will to the English ministers and officers, particularly to the governor general, the great ministers, General Fytche and yourself. I refrain from doing so for fear they might be refused

and returned. What a shame it would then be to a sovereign ruler !

*Secretary.*—Being loyal subjects of her majesty the Queen we are bound to obey the orders of our government, but no doubt in time your majesty will understand our government better.

*Political Agent.*—In time both states will understand each other's customs.

Here the King, after a pause good-humouredly related at considerable length a story wherein an elephant, monkey and a partridge are said to have agreed to be guided in all their doings by the senior in age of the three. After much discussion which need not be repeated, the seniority was established and conceded in favour of the partridge, who proved that the banian tree came into existence long after his birth, since he had dropped the seed from his own beak ; whilst on the other hand the elephant and the monkey could only state that the banian tree had already sent forth a few branches when they were born.

This story was brought in as an illustration to show that the Burmese custom and usage are of a more ancient date than that of any other nation, and that therefore they should have the preference above other customs. When his majesty had finished, the conversation was resumed as follows :—

*King to the Secretary.*—I wish you to convey my sentiments on this subject to the English government, with a view to their modifying the restrictions imposed on their ministers as far as I (their friend) am concerned.



*Secretary.*—I will not fail your majesty to represent your wishes in the proper quarters.

*King to the Secretary.*—I regret to say that my scribes have not as yet finished copying the ancient history, (the books are so voluminous,) and I am thus unable to present them personally to you; but the books will be sent down to you through McMahan as soon as they are ready.

*Secretary.*—I am much indebted and feel very grateful to your majesty.

After the interview the King provided us with a tiffin in the hall of audience, which was served up in large silver dishes with golden goblets. Several dishes of fruits, cakes, and fresh and dried fruits were placed under each cover. We partook of this tiffin in company with the minister, during which we all conversed together on general topics.

As we are to be on board the steamer before four o'clock in the afternoon, we had no time to see the gardens, and the so-called white elephant; but Mr. Ferrie, who had been over the palace with the Rev. J. E. Marks on the previous Saturday, has kindly furnished me with the following description:—

“On arriving at the palace about nine o'clock in the morning, we found that the princes, who had been pupils of Mr. Marks, had not left their beds, and we accordingly paid a visit to the so-called white elephant. He was a vicious brute with white eyes certainly, but his skin was of the ordinary colour, saving that it appeared as if it had been scrubbed with pumice stone. He was tied up in a shed, but



was surrounded with all the adjuncts of royalty, in the shape of a gold umbrella and a white canopy. Next we saw the royal carriages, which appeared to be of English or Calcutta make, but were covered all over with gilding. After this we saw the htee, or umbrella, which is being prepared as a royal gift to cover the summit of the great Shoay Dagon pagoda at Rangoon. It was being covered with gold plates about one-sixteenth of an inch in thickness, which were hammered on to an iron framework with iron nails in the usual Burmese fashion. When finished there will be four hundred lbs. of gold upon it, which calculated at £4-10s., an ounce gives a total of £28,000.

“We now returned to the palace, and were met by one of the princes, and proceeded to the audience hall, where we found two other princes. In a short time we were told that the King would see us “under the tree,” which turned out to be a side court shaded by trees. We were accordingly led to the northern side of the palace, and then after ascending a flight of steps, and passing through several small doors, we entered a small court yard in which was a kind of wooden arbour. Lumps of jade stone of considerable value were lying about. His majesty appeared shortly afterwards, and conversed with us in the most affable and condescending manner for about an hour.

“The commander-in-chief, who seemed to be a very respectable elderly gentleman, was then deputed to conduct us, together with the three young princes, through all the palace gardens. These gardens oc-

cupy the north-western corner of the palace enclosure; they were laid out in squares, and are crossed in different places by canals of brick work, in which the water is said to be seven fathoms in depth. The pathways run in every direction, with grottos here and there.

"We saw some Burmese soldiers being exercised. They wore red coats with green facings, and brass hats with biloes or griffins in front. They were being trained to throw their feet as high as possible in the air. After this we took our leave, much pleased with the extraordinary scene."

*Tuesday, 13th December.*—We left Mandalay yesterday afternoon at four o'clock. The Pangyet Woon was on board, having been directed by the King to proceed to Paghan for the purpose of inspecting the iron mines.

Minjan.

Reached Minjan about two o'clock in the afternoon. Here the Captain would have taken six hundred bales of cotton on board as cargo, but was prevented from doing so in consequence of a demand from the Burmese custom house authorities for ten per cent duty. This was contrary to treaty, but the officials would not yield. The Pangyet Woon said that he could not interfere, but would report the matter immediately to his government, when the restrictions would be instantly removed. The officials were probably only trying it on us for the sake of procuring a bribe.

Some officials connected with the Burmese telegraph station at Minjan came on board, and I took



the opportunity of testing the working of the line by dispatching a message to Major McMahon at Mandalay, who will probably report hereafter the hour at which he received it.

*Wednesday, 14th December.*—About nine o'clock <sup>Ngyoungoo.</sup> this morning we anchored for a short time at the village of Ngyoungoo a little above Paghan. Here my Burmese writer went on shore with two other Burmese, all of whom were accidentally left behind. It may here be mentioned that the poor fellows suffered considerably from their negligence. They had to engage a boat, and row day and night for two days and a half before they caught the steamer; and they had no warm clothes with them to protect them against the chills at night, and nothing to eat all day but plantains.

About ten o'clock A. M. we reached Paghan, where <sup>Paghan.</sup> I bade adieu to the Pangyet Woon.

This evening we anchored off Yaynan-gyoung. <sup>Yaynan-gyoung.</sup> The Tseekay of the place, a very stout man, came on board, and brought with him a singing woman and her husband. We had a performance from the two which lasted about two hours. The woman was pretty, and sang remarkably well, chiefly solos, but she also sang one or two duets with her husband. The melodies were very far superior to any native singing I ever heard in India; less metallic and monotonous, and with melodies almost European in style. The first songs were love ditties. A princess was in love with a prince, but there was as usual some difficulty on the part of the parents, who refused their consent to the marriage. The lady declared



her passion and bemoaned her fate in language somewhat stronger than is consonant with English ideas; but still there was a plaintive tone, and earnestness in the singing, which rendered it very effective. The lady sang how in former times, when people were so afflicted with disappointment in love, the Brahmas (gods) came down to console and help them; and she asked how it was that they did not do so still? "Their conduct," she said, "was cruel. Surely they must be fast asleep, and if they are so short-sighted as not to observe the troubles in this world, the people will present them with a pair of diamond spectacles. I am so troubled that I cannot eat, drink or sleep; and if I do sleep for a while my dreams are very terrible. Oppressed by these sorrows I will fly away to a solitude, and put on the white dress of a nun." Next followed a duet in which the lady complained that her lover took the matter very coolly and did not share her sufferings; and above all that he did not take the same trouble on her account as she had taken in his behalf. The prince replied that women were dangerous, and placed their affections on the wealth of their admirer rather than on the admirer himself. "The love of women," he added, "may burn fiercely for a while, but if they lose one lover they soon find another."

At this point I asked if these people sang nothing but love songs. In reply I was told that this was far from being the case, as they themselves delighted in songs of a more domestic character, like those of Burns, but that they always sang love songs in the presence of Europeans, under the impression that such were preferred. At my request the lady then

left off the amatory singing, and favoured us with songs about flowers and birds, men and children, the bleak snows of the Himalayas, the merry sunshine of the jungle, the people working in the paddy fields, and the boys and girls playing in the villages. The melody of these songs was very pleasing, and although not entirely free from that metallic twang, in which uncultivated voices are prone to indulge, the tones were sufficiently sweet and simple and pleasing to the ear, and appropriate to the scenes to which the songs referred.

*Thursday, 15th December.*—At half past eleven Menhla. o'clock this morning we arrived at Menhla, the last station within the territories of the King of Ava. In the afternoon we entered British territory and finally reached Thayet-myo, where we landed for a while.

*Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 16th, 17th and Henzada. 18th December.*—The fag end of a return voyage is always void of interest, although our party on board were as lively as ever. On Saturday we landed at Henzada, and were hospitably entertained by Captain Plant, and spent a genial evening, which will be pleasantly remembered for many a long day by all present.

*Monday, 19th December.*—On this day at two Rangoon. o'clock in the afternoon we landed at Rangoon, after one of the pleasantest trips imaginable. This was due partly to the novelty of the localities visited, but in a still greater measure to the good feeling and determination of all on board to promote the pleasure of the voyage; and above all to the constant and highly successful efforts of Captain Bacon to contri-

bute to the happiness of all his passengers, not only by the skilful navigation of his vessels through difficult waters, but by giving his fellow-voyagers a good table, meeting every reasonable wish, and being always ready, when circumstances permitted, to join in any amusement with which our little party occasionally sought to wile away the passing hours.

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APPENDIX.

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British Burma,

No. 3-1 P.

FOREIGN DEPARTMENT.

(POLITICAL.)

FROM

MAJOR GENERAL ALBERT FYTCHE, C. S. I.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER, AND

AGENT TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY

AND GOVERNOR GENERAL.

TO

C. U. AITCHISON ESQR. C. S. I.

SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,

FOREIGN DEPARTMENT.

*Dated Rangoon, January 10th 1871.*

SIR,

I have the honour to forward for the information of the Government of India twelve copies of a Journal of the voyage to Mandalay and Bhamo, which was undertaken by my Secretary, Mr. Talboys Wheeler, in the months of November and December last.

2. I have been much gratified with the results of Mr. Wheeler's trip, which extended for a thousand miles up the river Irrawaddy. His Journal furnishes interesting and graphic descriptions of a country

and people but little known to Europeans ; whilst considerable tact and discretion were displayed by Mr. Wheeler in his interviews with His Majesty the King of Ava, and the Ministers of State. Mr. Wheeler's tact will also be found favourably mentioned in the Diary of the Political Agent at Mandalay, which has been forwarded to your address by the same Mail Steamer which carries this despatch.

3. I trust that the Journal of Mr. Wheeler, as well as that gentleman's proceedings, may meet with the approval of His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General in Council.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most Obedient Servant,

(SD.) A. FYTCHE, MAJOR GENERAL C. S. I.,  
*Chief Commissioner and Agent  
to His Excellency the Viceroy  
and Governor General.*

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